

REFLECTIONS ON  
THE REVOLUTION IN FRANCE.

# BURKE

## REFLECTIONS ON REVOLUTION IN FRANCE

EDITED WITH  
INTRODUCTION, ANALYSIS AND EXPOSITION, MARGINALIA  
AND NOTES

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BOMBAY  
K. & J. COOPER  
Educational Publishers

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## PREFACE.

This Edition has been prepared in response to repeated requests. The length of the *Reflections* and the defects of its plan indicate needs which I have endeavoured to meet by an Analysis and marginal Summary, by an attempt to explain the situation in France and by an exposition of the main principles referred to. I trust the Annotations will be found sufficient and that students will be enabled to appreciate the literary style of this great master of language.

R. S.

I Jan. 1910.

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## INTRODUCTION.

### LIFE AND WRITINGS OF BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE was for a period of thirty years a great figure in the public life of England. He did not, as most men have done, rise by slow degrees to distinction and eminence. From his first entrance into Parliament his powers were fully developed. In 1766 one only, the elder Pitt, rivalled him in genius and eloquence. But the great Commoner was soon to retire from the scene of his triumphs, to the dignity and repose of the gilded Chamber. For a few months there was a conjunction, such as is without parallel, of a rising and a setting star; and men were unable to determine which possessed the finer or more splendid lustre. But the years that followed were by no means a life-time of prosperity. The path across the firmament was through cloud and storm, and the career of the statesman was troubled and tumultuous. Others rose around him to equal his fame and surpass his influence ; but the work of administration was withheld from the men of talent and genius. It was this exclusion from office that enabled Burke to extend his studies of history over all recorded time, and to produce the volumes of eloquence and wisdom that will guide political thinkers through all the ages that are to be. For ten years previous to his entrance into public affairs Burke had given himself to literary work, and specially to the

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study of social and political problems. He entered Parliament with a trained intellect and a practised pen. Simultaneously he was a founder of the famous Club where, in the company of wits and artists, he joined in the lighter and brighter play of life, shone in that galaxy of genius as one of the greater luminaries, and learned to combine with solidity of reason and strength of argument the graces of elegance and form that relieve the tension of debate and give permanence to knowledge. Burke was a philosopher amongst statesmen, and amongst philosophers he was a man of large experience and practical wisdom. While deeply interested in every British question he mastered, in the course of his career, and in the midst of exciting events, the problems successively of America, of India and France. But the questions of history change and the names of statesmen perish; Burke survives as a fountain of permanent wisdom, and a master of consummate eloquence.

Burke was an Irishman, and the son of a Solicitor in Dublin. The date of his birth is usually given as 12th January 1729; but there is a doubt whether 1728 or 1729 is the correct year; and the reference in the *Reflections* to his grand climacteric seems to favour the earlier date, which is the entry in the register of Trinity College. He was sent to school to a village thirty miles from Dublin, where he had the advantage of a teacher for whom he felt a life-long regard. In 1743 he entered Trinity College, where he graduated in 1748. There he read extensively but somewhat desultorily; and in an interesting letter, written in 1746, he marks four stages of intellectual interest through which with ardent enthusiasm he found himself passing. First he was absorbed in mathematics and physical science, next in logic and mental philosophy, thirdly in historical studies, and lastly in poetic literature. The same succession, beginning with the abstract and the purely intellectual and advancing to a knowledge of human life and the arts that interpret life, might be traced in the careers of many

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that have been richly furnished both in mental and in moral endowment; and we may see in this fourfold study the first foundations of Burke's intellectual greatness. By this time the study of Law in London was designed for him, and early in 1750 young Burke crossed over to the greater island, and began a new course of study at the Middle Temple. Here Burke disappointed his father. While he imbibed the spirit of law he developed a reluctance to prepare for the drudgery of the profession. General interests attracted him, and above everything he felt the fascinations of literature. At this time, if not earlier in Dublin, he wrote his most philosophic treatise, the pioneer *Essay on the ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*; but it remained for some years in manuscript. Burke, like his contemporary Goldsmith, went through a period of hardship in which experiences of life were gathered; but the known facts are as limited in the one case as they are ample in the other. Both had the Celtic temperament, and the instinct of travel, and the restlessness of intellectual curiosity. Both visited the Continent, and the country districts of England. And both tried and outwore the patience of their guardians. In 1755 Burke's father withdrew allowances, and from that date the young adventurer had to consider the ways and means of life.

In 1756 his first two books were published. They reflect the two sides of his intellectual activity. One is æsthetic, selecting for investigation the two spheres of emotion out of which have arisen the higher art and literature of the world. The other is political and historic, being a study of the social and civic combinations through which men have formed themselves into tribes and kingdoms and nations. Both are mirrors of their time as well as of their author. The art of psychological analysis had been established by Locke, and, through the eighteenth century, was carried into spheres of interest other than the purely intellectual. Several of Burke's contemporaries were moralists, investigating the

ethical sense and sentiments ; and a comparison of the moral and æsthetic perceptions had already been instituted by Shaftesbury and others. Burke found, in his *Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas on the Sublime and Beautiful*, an almost untrodden territory. But it was not his task to linger and examine and completely explore. His book was eminently suggestive, but it was also juvenile. In Britain it had little direct effect. Nevertheless it had the good fortune to pass over into Germany at a time when a new generation of great thinkers were turning their open minds to problems of criticism both in philosophy and art. The first of these was Lessing, one of the creators of modern critical method. Burke's book made on him a profound impression, and the result was seen when in 1766 the *Laokoön* was published, the work which is the starting point in modern conceptions of poetry as a Fine Art. Burke's essay influenced also the greater name of Kant, a philosopher whose Scotch descent made him perhaps more ready to accept the scientific thought and fresh suggestion that came to him from England. Burke himself was drawn to the stormier side of life, and had to leave behind him the pleasing speculations of his boyhood. The other twin-birth in which he professed to vindicate Natural Society is more fully described in its second title : *a View of the Miseries and Evils arising to mankind from every species of Civil Society, in a Letter to a Lord—, by a late Noble Writer.* Here, still more, we see the manner of the time, and the folly on which a clever man could trade. The late noble writer is Bolingbroke, who died in 1751, and Burke's anonymous book professed to be one more posthumous work of that distinguished man. Not only so, but the world believed it. It is supposed that Burke very successfully imitated the style of Bolingbroke; and it has also been suggested that through this imitation Burke's manner was permanently affected. It seems to us that even in this first dissertation the more solid and weighty sentences of Burke might be distinguished from the easier and more superficial rhetoric of St. John. But

the point to notice is the substance of the book. Here we see the manner of irony which for two generations had prevailed; and are surprised to find that Burke succeeded as fully as on a former occasion Defoe had done. The argument of the book was intended as ridicule of theories already in the air. But the raw minds of an unintellectual generation took the imposture solemnly. Burke when in the next decade he entered Parliament had to explain that the argument, which exhibited civilisation as an evil, was ironical.

The book is still interesting to students of the *Reflections*. By Natural Society is meant savage life, and the ideas discussed are those that were afterwards crystallised into an image of attractiveness in the sensational writings of Rousseau. Burke in his *Reflections* discusses the social contract, and, while repudiating the French dreamer, he continues the phraseology which had been in use for nearly two centuries and was embedded in the foundation documents of the English Revolution. But his contract or compact has reference to the richest results of intellectual attainment and mental experience; and his conception of social origins and national continuity is set forth with a majesty of thought and phrase which is itself an enrichment of the human race. The *Vindication* shows that the *Reflections* was no new or inconsistent phase of Burke's development in thought or policy; but rather that the lessons enforced in his closing years were a deeper and a more deeply charged restatement of the political philosophy which he imbibed in youth and held firmly at the commencement of his public career. A study of these books shows the extent to which even the greatest writers are products of their age. The problems of law and government and social organisation were matters of constant study in England, at least from the date of the events preceding the Revolution of 1688; and a generation later those simmering ideas passed over into France. Both the state of nature and the theory of popular sovereignty are to be found in the verse of Dryden; and an admiration of English ideas

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and organisations was carried across the Channel by Voltaire and others. The first monumental work on these subjects, prepared in long silence and observation with the concentration and devotion repeated by Gibbon, was Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws*, published in 1748. Perhaps no other work had so much effect in enlarging and directing the mind of Burke; and in one of his latest publications, the *Appeal to the Old Whigs*, he inserts a fine eulogy on this early master who taught him to love the British constitution. The eighteenth century was an epoch of the underground growth of democratic principles. In France, under the pressure of absolute and costly government, matters advanced to perilous and mischievous extremes, which in other countries led to reaction and delay. But in the middle of the century, when Burke was a young man, these excesses were as yet undreamt of. The British Constitution presented itself both to Frenchmen and Englishmen as a wisely balanced system which had grown into predestined shape through the struggles and experiences of centuries, or as an august fabric reared by the wisdom of the ages. From Burke it called forth the homage of his mind and of his soul; and his reverence survived the obstinate errors of George III. the occasional disturbances of the cities, and the blunders of both Houses of Parliament. But even in his youth, when he wrote his mocking *Vindication* he had discerned the first beginnings of a spirit of rashness and ignorance which was unconscious of benefits, and unable to appreciate what was great or venerable or beautiful or sacred in the inheritance from the past; which would, if it could, turn the world upside down to make new and riotous experiments on the odd basis of primeval and unartificial life.

But apart from the insane conception of a return to savagery, which was the theme of the author's irony, there were notes struck in the book that were not altogether welcome to official administrators. Burke was always able to state his enemy's case, and here he

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progress of our race. And this suggests a point of comparison between him and Carlyle. Both believed in an aristocracy of wisdom and virtue, and both hated the march of democracy. But, in compensation, they wished to direct attention to the wrongs of the multitude and the needs of consideration and redress. The condition-of-England question was not unfelt by either ; and that sensibility which wept over Marie Antoinette was also roused by the thought of serfdom, by every tale of tyranny, and by the spectacle of laborious occupation in conditions inimical to health of body or of mind. In the *Reflections* as in the *Vindication* he tells us how he has ever felt for the men that have to work in mines, or in poisonous atmospheres created by industries that promote the gaiety of the thoughtless world.

The year 1756 was followed by fresh literary activity. Burke wrote *Hints for an Essay on the Drama*; an account of the *European Settlements in America*, and *an Abridgment of the History of England* which came down to the twelfth century. The interest of these is chiefly autobiographical. The drama continued to interest him; the American studies were helpful when America became the disturbed centre of politics and when he himself accepted a colonial agency; and a knowledge of English History underlies all his political work. The increased interest in public events during the Seven Years' War, in the course of which the English so largely supplanted the French both in America and in India, led to the publication of an Annual Register which Burke was engaged to write. The first volume appeared in 1758, and for thirty years he assisted in this task. This handling of contemporary history brought him into touch with politicians and public life. The first result was a connection, begun in 1759, with Hamilton who is known by the inaccurate epithet "Single speech." In 1761 Hamilton became Irish Secretary, and Burke accompanied him as an assistant. It was a position welcomed by Burke as one in which he might be able to benefit his native

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land. Especially did he sympathise with his kindred in their two grievances of commercial restriction and religious disability. He was found so useful that in 1763 Hamilton procured for him a life-pension of £300. It turned out, however, that the benefactor expected that the whole energies of his client should be employed in the service or interests of his chief. Burke wished to carry forward some literary work on which at the time his mind was bent, and to be free for the future to exercise powers of which he could not be unconscious. To this Hamilton would not consent, and accordingly, early in 1765, the pension was resigned and the connection severed. Burke complained bitterly of the time he had lost while others were advancing. But his work was not altogether vain, for he was soon introduced to a worthier patron, with whom he formed one of the most honourable connections in the whole extent of English history.

The accession of George III. in 1760 marked a new era in English politics. The imprudent monarch, eager to be the active head of the administration, had set himself to break down the old Whig organisation. Pitt retired, and the Duke of Newcastle, the nominal Premier, was dismissed, 1762. Then came the short ministry of the unpopular Bute. He was followed in 1763 by George Grenville, an industrious and capable but obstinate and unconciliatory minister, who succeeded in offending both the American colonies and the King. His immortal production was the Stamp Act which aroused the American antagonism. He was dismissed in June 1765; and the King found it necessary to summon the official leader of the purified Whigs, the Marquis of Rockingham; and to accept for the time a policy contrary to his own strong inclinations. To Rockingham Burke was introduced as one well fitted to be his private secretary; and although there were murmurs the arrangement stood, and a fruitful friendship was the consequence. The ministry was dismissed after a year, in

which amongst other things the Stamp Act was repealed. Burke wrote a brief simple statement of what he considered its memorable achievements. The next step was the Chatham administration whose variegated aspect Burke has described in one of his many unforgettable pictures. The medley ministry continued for sixteen years, led scarcely at all by its original framer, presided over for a time by the Duke of Grafton, and then for twelve years by Lord North. During all these years Burke and his friends were in opposition. The three successive premiers were Whigs, and Burke could have had office had he chosen; but to his enduring honour he, though in straitened circumstances, stood aloof from arrangements which he disapproved; and identified himself with the men whose moral independence and adherence to principle brought upon them the malice of the minions of the court.

This long-continued instrumental ministry is known in history by two series of events which arose in antagonism to the policy which it consented to carry out. The first consisted in ebullitions of discontent at home, and of encroachments by the Commons or the Court on the rights of the people. The Wilkes' case and the interference with the freedom of elections began in 1768. The renewal of troubles with America, the mismanagement of administration, the prevention of parliamentary reporting, the unpopularity of particular ministers, and the unprosperous conditions of commerce and industry, produced a state of acute dissatisfaction of which we still have literary monuments in two books of Burke and in the once famous *Letters of Junius*. These Letters which appeared in 1769 and 1770, have been, since 1816, generally regarded as the work of Sir Philip Francis who about the time they ceased accepted an appointment in India. Their origin was a question of conjecture and Burke was one of many accused of the authorship. The Letters are master-pieces of satire, though they show a malicious rather than a prolific and

richly cultured type of mind. The authorship is not yet finally settled, and even now the name of Gibbon is put forward. It is certain that they are not the writing of Burke, nevertheless the opinions are identical with his, and there are sentences amongst the earlier letters that might have come from his pen. It cannot be denied that in later years he took counsel with the malignant Francis. Burke's own writings of this date are *Observations on the Present State of the Nation* 1769, a pamphlet in reply to a pamphlet by George Grenville, and *Thoughts on the Present Discontents* 1770. These are the writings not of a satirist but of a statesman, and philosopher. In the *Observations* Burke for the first time showed that he had studied commercial and fiscal questions as thoroughly as he had studied constitutional questions. But the second pamphlet is of greater importance. Unlike the *Reflections* it is intended as the manifesto of his party. The book analyses the political situation, and traces the troubles to the unauthorised second or secret Cabinet; and it gives the author's remedies. But like all Burke's writings it contains much that, rising out of the controversies of the hour, sets forth maxims and rules that are true for every age. Politics are contemplated in a manner that anticipates modern science. They are not regarded, to use the words of a modern disciple of Bolingbroke (Disraeli), as an affair of monarchs and statesmen, but as affecting the entire life of a people in all their relationships and complexity of interests. The new seriousness of method that perhaps dates from Montesquieu was represented in public life by Burke and by Turgot before Adam Smith elaborated his *Wealth of Nations*, and before politics were conceived afresh by Professors of the Universities or by statesmen such as Pitt and Mackintosh. And again Burke took occasion to refute the most plausible fallacy of his day. This was not vulgar Toryism but a theory, derived from Bolingbroke, of a Patriot King disregarding party connection and ruling in the interests of the people. Party government is, of course, liable to the

extreme of partisanship and rancour; and there is a certain reasonableness in the attitude of the Trimmer who belongs to neither side and (according to the idea of Halifax) has regard only for the national good. But this reasonableness fades in practice, and the word 'trimmer' has become a name of reproach. The tendency to divide into two parties, a conservative and a progressive, seems to arise out of the laws of nature. It is a general tendency, not a hard and fast system which cannot be overborne by temporary expediency. Burke, like Junius, shattered the hollow cant of "measures not men;" and showed the supreme advantage of a body of comrades, trained by experience, united in principles, actuated by common aims and ends, and bound together by the holy laws of friendship. And in contrast therewith he exposed the evil spirit of faction which made men or families united in mischievous groups for the promotion of selfish ends. But this volume of Burke's thoughts by no means gave universal satisfaction. It disappointed the more daring mind of Chatham; and it disappointed the whole body of advanced Reformers. Already the question of the Reform of the House of Commons (such as was carried out in 1832 and in the later Bills of 1867 and 1885) was urged by large numbers of the people and by several members of Parliament. Burke opposed all such organic change. He would have no extension of the suffrage, but rather the opposite, if thereby the quality of the electors should be improved. The democratic movement had begun, and the demand for real representation ; but this only hardened the aristocratic temper of Burke. He did indeed favour reform, but in other directions ; in the correction of abuses, and in the way of increasing independence and moral responsibility. And at a later period, in 1780, he was able to give considerable effect to his opinions, by a great measure of Economical Reform. But the questions of a lowering of the franchise, of electoral redistribution and of more frequent elections, continued in his way for twenty years. And at all risks

he remained obstinate. It is this attitude that places Burke in opposition to modern liberalism. What his opinions would have been to-day, when education is diffused, when the nobility of land and wealth no longer predominate over the representatives of the liberal arts and higher professions and a hundred forms of national service, it is impossible to say. His philosophy recognised the principle of adaptation, and both mind and heart would have placed him on the side that studied the national good. But, as it is, the books that he bequeathed and the position that he firmly held place him amongst the apostles of aristocracy, the last of the old Conservatives, the last and the greatest because in him was gathered and consummated all that is true of their philosophy and wisdom.

The second group of questions at this stage of Burke's parliamentary career concerned America. The ministry under Grafton renewed taxation, and Lord North continued the policy when it was certain that armed strife would be the result. King and people reasoned that since expenses were incurred for the colonists they should contribute a portion to the Treasury. It is a mistake to suppose that Burke considered this policy wrong in itself, or that he approved of the action of the opposers in America. He looked at the matter from another point of view. It was a practical question, with great moral bearings. He had studied the temper of the Americans, and knew that on the basis of forced taxation no settlement was possible. He knew also that the colonies were not worth keeping unless the peoples were bound together by mutual affection. And there was another aspect that appealed to him and his associates. The American question was one effect, and one part, of the attempt of the king to revive prerogative and upset the balance of the Constitution. If the Americans were conquered it would require a great and expensive army to preserve order; and the same methods could be directed against the assertors of liberty at home. Therefore

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it was that the independence of the colonists was desired by a considerable number of the people of England. And in the end that solution was universally acquiesced in. Burke's thoughts on the subject are expressed in two great speeches, on *American Taxation* 1774, and on *Conciliation* 1775, and again in his *Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol* 1777. These are the utterances which Lord Morley places first in the productions of Burke; "the vigorous grasp of masses of compressed detail, the wide illumination from great principles of human experience, the strong and masculine feeling for the two great political ends of Justice and Freedom, the large and generous interpretation of expediency, the morality, the vision, the noble temper." And it may be admitted that for solid and extensive wisdom these are the two greatest speeches in the English, or perhaps in any, language. If however we think only of oratory the greatest of Burke's orations belongs to his impeachment of Hastings; while, in respect of political thought and knowledge, the greatest of his writings, and of all such writings, is his *Reflections*. Even in those sections thereof where he is unjust to the French there is an illumination which redeems the whole.

During the long years from 1766 to 1782 Burke was using the resources of his skill and wisdom to build up a constitutional Whig party; and to supply it with methods and ideas and principles. The adherence of Fox gave him, in course of time, an official leader little inferior to himself in strength or charm of mind. Amongst incidents personal to Burke are his marriage (1756 or 1757) to a daughter of the Dr. Nugent who with himself was an original member of the Club of which Johnson was the central figure. In that club Johnson and Burke, Goldsmith and Gibbon, Reynolds and Garrick, with others who in their own day were of high esteem, met once a week for the "feast of reason and the flow of soul." And the world has reckoned Boswell amongst its benefactors because he has preserved for

us fragments of their talk. In 1768 Burke, though he had no money, purchased a property known by the name of Beaconsfield, in the county of Buckingham. It was his hope to found a family amongst the landed aristocracy. The price was about £22,000; the purchase was made on sanguine calculations which were not realised, but the land and a spacious home remained with him, or his widow, till 1812. Here Burke took interest in farming and gardening, as well as in treasures of literature and art. He had entered the House of Commons, (first elected on 26th December 1765) through the influence of a friend, Lord Verney; and for his pocket borough, Wendover, he sat till 1774. In the elections of the latter year he had to seek a new constituency. Unexpectedly he was chosen and elected for Bristol, then the second city of the kingdom. For this constituency he sat six years; but the liberality of his policy towards Ireland and Catholics, and to some extent his theory of the independence of a representative, alienated the electors. Before the close of the Parliament, in February 1780, he introduced his great project of Economical Reform, the one important legislative act that he was able in some degree to carry into effect. The main object was the abolition of sinecures and pensions, by which not only was public money wasted but the independence of a large number of members of Parliament was effectively destroyed. In the summer he found a new constituency in Malton, which he represented till his final retirement.

In the new Parliament the position of Lord North's ministry was being gradually undermined, and in March 1782, the change came. A year or two of political sensation followed. Lord Rockingham was again called to the premiership from which he had been dismissed sixteen years before. Fox and Shelburne were his Secretaries of State. The office assigned to Burke was outside the Cabinet and, though well paid, was administratively unimportant. Minor offices were given to his

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brother and to Sheridan. It is a permanent reproach to the Whigs that no higher office was given to the man who so long had been their brain and their spokesman. But a certain unpopularity clave to Burke and his family, who were regarded as Irish adventurers, and it is supposed that the Prince of Wales (at this time the patron of the party of Fox) was hostile to him. Some of the Whig leaders, but not all, were unable to endure what they considered the overbearing character of one whose mental vigour and overwhelming personality they did not quite appreciate.

As it was things might have prospered, but after a few months, calamity came in the sudden death of Lord Rockingham (July 1782). It happened that ill-feeling existed between the two Secretaries, Shelburne and Fox, due undoubtedly to the unamiable character of the former. Shelburne was now called to the Premiership; and as a consequence, Fox, and with him Burke and Sheridan, declined to remain in the ministry. Burke differed from the new leader on questions of reform. Shelburne was able to find a fresh ally in the youthful Pitt, who had haughtily declined the subordinate office offered him by Rockingham. Both Burke and Fox virulently opposed the new ministry, and in order to overthrow it they entered into alliance with the followers of Lord North, whose policy they had formerly denounced, but who now repudiated his own past and stood with them on the same platform of constitutional Whiggism. This union of Fox and North is the famous Coalition which all writers have agreed to reprobate. But it is possible that Fox's contempt of Shelburne and his forgiveness of North may yet find justification in the final verdict of impartial history. But what fails is, in the first instance, condemned. It fell to Shelburne and Pitt to complete the treaty with America; and then early in 1783, after seven months of office, the ministry was upset. It was now the turn of the Coalition. The new head was the Duke of Portland, Fox and North were the Secretaries,

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and Burke returned to the Paymaster's office. Their chief legislative attempt was the India Bill of Fox, perhaps mainly the work of Burke, in which it was proposed to abolish the East India Company, and to substitute for the Board of Directors a commission of seven, nominated in the first instance in the Bill. Burke defended the measure with all his eloquence and pronounced a fine eulogy on the minister who had charge of it and was proving himself a worthy descendant of Henry IV. of France. The Bill passed the Commons; but through royal influence it was defeated in the Lords; whereupon, in December, the ministry was dismissed; and thus in about a year and a half three ministries, to two of which Burke belonged, came to untimely ends. The King was emboldened to these active measures by having found in the young Pitt a statesman of genius who placed his talents and popularity at the service of his royal master. A general election followed, and all the influence that the Court could command, aided by the efforts of the mercantile community, was actively employed to defeat the official Whigs. Thus, after two short half years, the official life of Burke was for ever closed.

Eighteen years<sup>7</sup>, had passed since Burke entered Parliament. Eleven were to follow before his retirement from the House of Commons, and nearly fourteen before his death. The future was destined to be stormier and sadder than the past. The ministry of Pitt was marvellously successful; and it lasted for seventeen years, though at one moment it was on the point of vanishing when a temporary illness befell the King, and in its later years it was sustained and made effective by a coalition with the followers of Burke. The part played by Burke himself in its earlier years was not altogether satisfactory. His triumphant opponents overwhelmed him with their contempt, and his proud sensitiveness replied with indignant scorn. But the charge of faction cannot be altogether repelled. The young statesman who was pleased to lead the Tories was more in sympathy with

the modern mind, and with its theories of finance and industry and commerce, than were the older and greater Whig giants who still clung to the ideas and modes of aristocratic warfare. Pitt was aided by a rapid revival and progress of trade and manufacture, and on finance and Irish and commercial questions he followed wise advice. But outside the normal course of events Burke found two great questions on which he was able to concentrate all the powers of his restless and powerful intellect. These concerned India and France.

To the study of Indian questions he devoted himself from about 1780, when the end of the American contest was in sight. And this study continued till the close, in 1795, of the great impeachment. He was directed to the subject by a kinsman and benefactor, William Burke. The first step was taken when in 1781 a select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to examine and report. Several Reports followed. Fox's India Bill, on which the ministry was wrecked, was one outcome. The speech on the Nabob of Arcot's debts, in 1785, was a great oratorical effort, and the paragraph on Hyder Ali, with his devastation of the Carnatic and with the striking transition, ranks as one of the finest utterances in English eloquence. It was in 1785 that Hastings returned; and, in June, Burke gave notice of his intention to arraign the conduct of the great governor. After many debates the impeachment was at last resolved on; articles of impeachment were agreed to; and in 1788 the great trial began. Burke's powers were then at their highest; and it is a marvellous instance of the success of masterful ability that he was able not only to create in himself an interest sustained through half a generation, but to create and quicken that interest in the minds of others, and to carry his resolutions in a house of commons in which his own party was but an insignificant minority. The question is a subject for a monograph on itself; but we may note that it partly

arose out of the course of English party politics ; that it was a continuation of the controversy on the East India Bill; that on Hastings as a focus were directed all the rays of the fury which Burke felt towards Indian merchants in general, and that Burke was predisposed to misjudge Hastings on account of the influence exerted on him by the malignant Sir Philip Francis. Apart from its immediate aspects the Impeachment had this effect, that it lifted the affairs of India out of matters of mercantile negotiation into affairs of primary, national importance, and that henceforward statesmen in India ruled under a new sense of personal and imperial responsibility. As regards Burke himself these Indian activities afford the greatest exhibition of his enormous powers. We see united with reason and memory a vast imagination that could picture an unvisited Continent quite foreign to his experience, and picture it in all its diversity of peoples and of modes of life and of historic changes. We see the combination of generalising power with the mastery of minute and infinite detail. And the intellectual is not the only aspect. Burke himself reckoned this above all his earlier services for the importance thereof, and for the judgment exercised, and for the labour and industry, and for constancy and perseverance in the pursuit.

When the trial began Burke, Fox, Sheridan and Windham stood together as delegated members of the Commons, and as friends united in a joint arraignment. Before the case was half finished Burke and Windham were sharply separated from Fox and Sheridan. A new and all-devouring controversy filled the world. This was the French Revolution, an unprecedented upheaval, from which electric waves issued vibrating through all lands. It was the international relations, the influence and the bearing on other lands, that made the question a dividing one in the English Parliament. Burke and the great nobles, Rockingham and Portland, with whom he was so closely united were strongly opposed to

all the demands which were put forth for what was called political reform. The influence of Burke had kept Fox on the same side ; but other Whigs such as the elder and the younger Pitt, the Earl of Shelburne and the Duke of Richmond, and many of the rank and file, took the more advanced side. When in France the Bastille fell, and the old order was tottering or passing, and the King himself was made a virtual prisoner, fundamental sympathies broke forth in irresistible utterance. The fall of the old prison was greeted by Fox in a fine frenzy of sublime delight. Burke, who saw and who felt more deeply, stood still with horror and amazement. Soon it was realised that a new epoch of history had dawned; and men fiercely took sides. When Parliament met early in 1790 it was found impossible to keep the burning and consuming question out of debate ; and in February the first hostile passage between Burke and his former associates took place, when Sheridan was repudiated It was a year later, on the 6th May 1791, when the *Reflections* had already passed through several editions, that the final rupture with Fox was made, and the old Whig party was shattered. The occasion and the scene were exciting in the extreme ; Burke furious and fierce, Fox weeping but in principle unyielding, a House struck with amazement, the galleries in tears. There is nothing comparable to it in British history. The separation of Gladstone and Bright in 1886, when again new ideas had to be encountered, was almost equally disastrous, but no word of recrimination or repudiation was then uttered in public. All public events are mixed, and if the quarrels of 1790-93 destroyed a historic party and secured a Tory predominance, they at the same time carried over to Pitt's weak cabinet a band of men inspired by Burke who more than their famed chief were the saviours, in the subsequent war, of the naval supremacy and imperial power of England.

It is to be deplored that in the last decade of his life Burke lost the command of temper which in earlier years

he had preserved. His deep and rich sensibility, which (according to Macaulay) had carried him passionately with all his powers into the impeachment of Hastings, now carried him with still greater force into hatred of the men who had overthrown the Church and the Nobility and the Monarchy of France. Burke was an Irishman, with the necessary defects of that impulsive and generous, but also occasionally vindictive, race. His knowledge and his vision placed him above all contemporaries. He had been rendered irritable by unjust depreciation, and by the failure of all the schemes of his life. And the volcanic demonstrations of his closing years were the consequence of his past combined with his fears for the future. Biographers and editors cheerily assume that Burke was entirely wrong, while in reality he was almost entirely right. The sanguine expectations of Fox are more gratifying to our natural minds and instincts; but in truth the wild prophecies of Burke were more than fulfilled. We are now in the second century thereafter; and have seen France, purified by long and repeated suffering, enter on a career of peaceful progress while her history and her men of genius have taught new lessons to the world. There arrives a time when, to repeat Burke's words, we may reach an elevation of reason "to which nothing can ascend but the spirit and moral quality of human actions." When that point is reached equal justice will be done to each of the two great men in whom at that crisis the political thought of England was incarnated.

Burke's writings on the French Revolution are first the *Reflections*, November 1790, then a *Letter to a Member of the National Assembly*, January 1791, then the *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs* (on the English Revolution chiefly), August 1791, then the *Thoughts on French Affairs*, December 1791, then a brief paper, *Heads for Consideration of the present State of Affairs*, December 1792, then *Remarks on the Policy of the Allies with respect to France*,

begun October 1793, and, along with these, *Observations on the Conduct of the Minority* (i. e., on Fox and his followers) in a Letter addressed to the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam. Besides these he published his *Speech on the Army Estimates*, 1790, which was the occasion of the first rupture, and various minor things. Finally came the *Letters on a Regicide Peace*, the *First, Second, Third* and *Fourth*, of which the last two were posthumous, and in all of which he urged the unflagging prosecution of the war. In these there is no abatement, but rather an increase, of eloquence and oratorical power; though it is deeply to be deplored that the policy of foreign interference was ever entertained. In the midst of all this Gallican excitement he preserved on other questions a judicial calm, revealing the capacity and comprehensiveness of a brain out of which Mackintosh observed that a Gibbon could be carved without sensible loss. Most notable of these is the Report on the Lords' Journals, 1794, made to the Commons in connection with the Hastings' case, but important from its knowledge and mastery of law; and in that great department proving the kinship of Burke with Bacon. A valuable paper of a semi-historical kind deals with his own country, Ireland, then as ever a subject of anxiety. In 1782 he had written a *Letter to a Peer* on the Penal Laws, and now he writes a *Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe* urging the grant of franchise to the Catholics, 1792. Another pamphlet, *Thoughts and Details on Scarcity*, shows a mastery of the fiscal problem and of the Free Trade question, 1795; while a *Letter to a Noble Lord* riots in mockery of the Duke of Bedford who had objected to a pension conferred upon him. In these latter years Burke won the homage of Europe, and of that Tory section of politicians that in his best days had affected to despise him. The death of his only son prevented the acceptance of a peerage, which his new friends honourably offered him; but he accepted the bounty by which he was able to cancel much of his debt.

At last on 9th July 1797, in the fulness of still expanding powers, like the Oriental sun that in broad red splendour kisses the waves and is engulfed while the western sky remains in a blaze of impassioned colour, this great orator and writer and thinker passed into a region untouched by the passions of earthly strife.

Burke is the greatest representative of the Irish race. He is one of the three or four greatest writers in all prose literature. He presents himself to us as a man of letters, an orator, a political philosopher, and a statesman; and we know that he was equally notable as an individual and as a conversationalist. Indeed the first feature of the man was his irrepressible and aggressive personality. Johnson remarked that one could not meet him accidentally for five minutes without discovering that he was a remarkable man. And later, when the sage was in a state of weakness, he said that to have to talk with him at that time would be fatal; "he calls forth all my powers." Burke's mind was ever active, ever full, ever ready, ever overflowing, and unable to practise silence or submission. These qualities made him masterful; hence the power that he possessed of moulding according to his will the minds of others. He was, through all his life, an enormous and a careful reader. Before he entered Parliament his mind was richly furnished. He had dreamt of philosophy and of history; and only the fascinations of public life prevented him from seeking fame in one of these directions. But while a desultory habit of mind prevented early concentration on one great literary task it gave him instead that wealth of knowledge and of ideas in which consisted one special distinction of his conversation and his books. His generous colleague said of him, in the first hour of their painful severance: "if all the political information I have learned

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from books, all which I have gained from science, and all which my knowledge of the world and its affairs has taught me were put into one scale, and the improvement which I have derived from my right honourable friend's instruction and conversation were put in the other, I should be at a loss to decide to which to give the preference." And in this eulogy there is nothing to surprise us. Johnson said of Goldsmith that he touched nothing without adorning it. This other friend touched nothing without enlarging and illumining it. From the *Reflections* we can gather that Burke was familiar with History ancient and modern, European and Oriental; and also that he was familiar with literature, English or French, Latin or Greek, having the classics as well as the moderns, and prose as well as poetry, at easy command. He also tells us that he discussed with French divines not only the general characteristics, but the minute distinctions, of the masters of theology in England. And traces of familiarity with philosophical and physical inquiry often reveal themselves. He knew, it is said, all the sciences and handicrafts and professions. This then is one set of facts, but beneath them is another more important. Behind the furniture of the mind is the mind itself; behind the laborious results of application is the power that applied itself. When at College Burke made the pregnant observation that reading was the pleasantest way of 'killing thought'; and on a later occasion, when writing to his son, he charged him not to be overwhelmed with materials of acquisition, but to preserve in its undiminished strength the *vivida vis*, the living force of the original and active mind. In these observations Burke pointed to the truth which has its classical expression in Milton's *Paradise Regained*: who brings not to his reading a mind equal or superior remains "deep-versed in books, but shallow in himself." Men cannot preserve what they do not possess. To Burke was given an original endowment more powerful

and more versatile than is the lot of ordinary humanity ; such power indeed as appears but once in a generation, or once in several generations. His mind was not greatly original, in the sense of being inventive, of being fired with curiosity to discover new laws, and create new contrivances, and compel secrets of life or nature to unfold themselves. He was original in the sense of being endowed with a powerful and independent understanding, with which was blended a deeply emotional nature charged with reverence and loftiness. His distinctive originality showed itself therefore in a profound interpretation of human character and human society. He knew the heart and soul and mind, as few, if any, have known it, since the days of Shakespeare. He knew society, and political institutions, and the forces of national coherence, as few, if any, modern statesmen have done. And he brought to bear on all problems of government and administration the rich resources that he possessed both in the moral ideas of his mind and in the treasures of experience he had gathered from his observation of the world and his study of the story of mankind. Macaulay, who knew him as a reverential student knows his master, and who, like Burke, had read all the literature of antiquity, said that "in amplitude of comprehension and richness of imagination" he excelled every orator of the world. And these words assuredly describe two of his most striking characteristics. They are the powers that enabled him to command the vast treasures of his knowledge and to set forth his moral and political ideas with varied and ample illustration. The subtler mind of De Quincey has expressed Burke's distinction thus: he "is the supreme writer of his century, the man of the largest and the finest understanding"; forthwith proceeding to explain what is meant by understanding, and by largest, and finest. This definition denies to him the highest qualities of intuitive and poetic genius, while it acknowledges on the one hand the breadth, the

variety, the extensiveness and the comprehensiveness of his intellect, and on the other hand the subtlety, or minuteness of discrimination, which was the concomitant of his mastery of detail. These descriptions are substantially correct. Burke possessed in an eminent degree poetic imagination, but not quite the imagination of the poet. He possessed an intellect in the highest sense powerful, comprehensive, diversified, far-seeing, yet not penetrative as Bacon's or constructive as Milton's. In his special sphere of political thought he is easily the first writer in the English language, and stands in that department on the same eminence as Bacon; who represents and interprets the ideas of the great Tudor age when monarchy was supreme, as Burke represents the more advanced Revolution settlement and an epoch when the centre of gravity and influence had passed to the wider aristocracy. Bacon is a greater man by his scientific pursuits, by his investigation of method, and by his visions of a world transformed through the discovery and application of scientific principles and laws of nature. He was a reformer in law as well as in science, and his mind was, perhaps, more fully stored with the maxims of policy and prudence and sagacity. Yet on the other hand Burke was more richly endowed on the emotional side, and therefrom he derived a loftiness of thought and a dignity of feeling which raised him above every art that ministers to selfish ends. It also imparted fervour and energy to his immense imagination. It is this, even more than intellectual gifts and acquisitions, that distinguishes him from other public men of the eighteenth century. It was an age that scorned enthusiasm; and the general ideas of Burke, as of his time, are utilitarian and practical. But through that practical utilitarianism breaks the light not only of large ideas and resplendent imagination, but of sentiments and sympathies that awaken in others a sense of the venerable, the sacred or the sublime. The distinction is ultimately one of race.

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and he is an Irishman more massive, more learned, more  
sovereign than his compatriots usually are; but, through  
all his imaginative and moral nature, animated by that  
*perfervidum ingenium*—that over-fervid genius and dis-  
position—that from distant ages has been the acknow-  
ledged characteristic of the race.

If we pass from the man to his work the most obvious observation is that, like Cicero of old, he is equally admirable as a writer, and as a speaker. It is true that as an orator he was not uniformly successful. His manner was awkward, his voice was unmusical, he was unduly excitable and impetuous, he was deficient in the arts and graces of action and expression that have been abundantly bestowed on many of his countrymen. But, what is worse, he was, as Macaulay said, ignorant or negligent of the art of adapting his reasonings to the capacities or moods of his hearers. He went on refining (as Goldsmith said) while they thought of dining. He did not closely confine himself to the matter in hand, but often traversed regions of thought through which his hearers did not care to follow him. The subject engrossed his mind, and he followed it through its ramifications and the suggestions of his own imagination, not considering whether the audience shared his interest or appreciated his exposition. But qualities that are admirable in literary dissertation may be cumbrous and injurious in oratory. This want of closeness and directness and simplicity told against him when he spoke on practical themes to business men. Far more effective were the closely-reasoned and oft-repeated arguments passionately delivered by Fox, and the sonorous and self-confident commonplaces that came from the dignified lips of Pitt. But speeches that seemed uninteresting, when delivered, were, when published, read with delight, when the reader had leisure to

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follow the windings and subtleties of argument or the flights and analogies of imagination. The late Lord Acton observed that in English political history there were three outstanding men of genius, Macaulay who was at his best in writing though he also spoke well, Gladstone who was at his best in speaking though he also wrote well, and Burke who was equally excellent in both kinds. The observation is just; for though Burke's speaking may have been ordinarily wearisome it was, when he was thoroughly roused, effective in the highest degree. Yet through all his work there is a massive splendour, a solidity and depth and weightiness of thought, that puts him beyond the easy reach of the popular mind, and can find for him a fit audience only in that aristocracy of wisdom and virtue to which he wished to commit all rule.

This double endowment involves a certain assimilation in his two styles. Especially in the later writings the oratorical element is prominent, while in the earlier speeches there is a certain flavour of lamp-light. Thus in the *Reflections* there are frequent instances of the figures of Exclamation and Interrogation, or of sarcasm and irony, such as are made most effective by voice and gesture when a speaker indulges in invective or argues in debate. Again the figure of climax which is so frequent in Burke's later writings, and in forms that mark gradations of sound, has about it an oratorical air. And, once more, the epistolary form, which in nearly all his later writings he adopted and which allows at will the manner of personal address, is another offspring of the same parentage. To these is to be added the cultivation of emotion, with its outbursts of surprise or indignation, with its sentiments of chivalry or reverence, and with the vein of lofty feeling that makes itself felt in half the pages of the book. This oratorical fervour is perhaps the most distinctive feature of Burke's literary style. It is an element of power, but it is not a quality of the rarest and finest kind.

In command of language Burke must rank with the highest. No prose writer has a more extensive and varied vocabulary or a fuller command of words. His main ideas are repeatedly enforced in variety of term and phrase. He is equally at home in classical and Saxon elements, and in learned or in homely phraseology. Sometimes in his vigorous thrusts he descends below what the dignity of the occasion requires. But on the whole he uses words in noble combinations unto noble ends.

No writer of our language in prose, unless it be Bacon or Carlyle, has coined so many notable phrases. Some of them may be called happy, others weighty, others such as "the opiate cup of amnesty" are semi-pedantic; but all are charged with thought; and in these original and memorable combinations we have one of the surest evidences of intellectual power.

In sentence-structure Burke has the fundamental merit of variety. He has none of the monotony that belongs to Johnson's earlier prose, and to many other styles. He has no perpetually recurring mannerisms. He has every degree of length. Many of his sentences are brief apophthegms, in antithetic or balanced expression. Sometimes a sentence is a succession of four or five short clauses, repeated as hammer strokes for emphasis and effect. Other sentences are rounded periods, where the subordinate clauses are first marshalled in due order before the principal clause is brought forward,—all in the most approved classical fashion. And there are the great climaxes, commencing with brief generalities, gradually rising and expanding in particularity of thought and fulness of expression, until the ear is gratified with the majesty of speech and the mind is overpowered by accumulated and unanswerable argument.

In the succession and linking of paragraphs we see further traces of art. The quality, which Goldsmith noted,

of “winding into the subject like a serpent” is very marked in this book which was written long after the troubled life of Goldsmith was over. In many of the sections three or four paragraphs are drawn out before it is clear what subject he has entered on; but in due time the argument is sufficiently emphatic and direct. If we take two successive paragraphs we generally find that towards the close of one the subject of the next is indicated, or that the opening sentences of the next look back to what preceded. This interlinking sometimes seems artificial, and has perhaps arisen from the manner in which the author revised and readjusted his argument. His paragraphs have the same variety as his sentences; now long now short, at one time simple at another elaborated, diversified with figurative arts and ornamental quotation adapted to the object and purpose in view.

The use of figurative language is a device by which the resources and effectiveness of speech have been doubled. Burke is a highly figurative writer. The imaginative author resorts to similes and metaphors and allegories in which his mind feels or works out resemblance—and also to those ‘figures of association’ (metonymy, antonomasia, &c.), where kindred effects are attained by symbolic suggestion or historic reminiscence. All these will be found strewn through the volumes of Burke. They are an essential expression of the poetic and fertile mind. They belong to literature rather than politics; and the frequent use of them is enough to show that, though Burke was a politician, he was primarily a man of letters. It would be instructive to follow out a comparison and contrast with the great pamphleteer of the first quarter of the eighteenth century, that other Irish or semi-Irishman of genius, Jonathan Swift. The contrast is complete. Swift indeed laboured through allegories; but they were of a mechanical rather than a poetic kind. And he claimed to be the inventor of one semi-figurative form, *viz.* irony.

But it has been said (though with exaggeration) that there is no metaphor in all his writings. His aim was simplicity, his manner was direct, he carried no encumbrance, but struck straight and firm at the mind and passions of his readers. He was undoubtedly effective, though perhaps he found audiences predisposed. Burke, on the other hand, until he was over sixty, was almost always in a minority, and his eloquence scarcely ever prevailed. But what permanent lessons are to be found in the pamphlets of Swift? No great moral ideas, no illuminating principles, no flashes on the pages of history, no elevation of sentiment or inspiration for higher endeavour. What indeed could be learned from the man who made the names of Bentley and of Newton objects of his jeering mockery? But in truth the reactionary writer has always an audience, and, when his theories are in the ascendant, he needs no art of ornament or enlightenment except directness of impassioned vituperation. It is one qualification of our appreciation of the *Reflections* that at last Burke was able to win the sympathy and applause of all the enemies of progress in Europe. But we must distinguish the immediate from the permanent; for the latter alone is literature. Swift's pamphlets are dead, and admiration of most of them is disease; but Burke's have an enduring interest and charm. Primarily this is due to profound insight and wisdom, yet no small part of that charm for the educated reader is in the indirect and sometimes cumbrous accompaniment of allusion and analogy: of poetic quotation and historic reference, of striking metaphor and skilful simile, and the various arts of suggestion and illustration.

His metaphors are a measure of his knowledge and resource; for they are drawn from every occupation on land and sea and from every science of earth or sky. No one has used tropical speech with such incisive vigour, and perhaps no one has excelled him in elaborated simile and illustration. It is true that here he comes

into competition with the great names of Bacon and Jeremy Taylor and Milton. He has not the calmness of philosophic comparison of the first, nor the fine fancy of the second, nor the altitude of poetic imagination or richness of musical expression that belongs to the third. In comparison with these his distinctive note is the oratorical, and his special attributes are energy, animation, intellectual vigour, overwhelming force. In the entire range of prose literature no writer can be named that excels, or even equals, Burke in power.

There is one large department of the literary art in which Burke failed to advance or even to maintain the traditions of his century. It was emphatically observed by Johnson that in one thing he was unsuccessful, though he made continuous efforts to succeed therein; namely in wit. Wit was an undoubted characteristic of Wycherley and Congreve on the stage, of Dryden and Pope in poetry, of Addison and Swift amongst the essayists, and of many others both in verse and prose. Wit was expected in those meetings and dinners where under the presidency of Johnson men of light and leading tried and vied to outshine one another. But each had his limitations; and, while Burke's conversation from its fulness and its flow was often entralling, his jokes were hardly ever successful. And this is doubly surprising when we remember the hosts of Irishmen of whom either wit or humour was the primary characteristic.

The explanation is to be found in a study of types of mind. Wit after all is the virtue of minds of a second order. It is almost incompatible with true greatness. When Goldsmith remarked that Johnson's little fishes would talk like whales he wittily described the inaptitude of the great master of conversation for the easy flexibility required in sparkling and appropriate wit. Johnson's own remark that Milton could hew a Colossus from a rock but not carve heads on cherries is another

statement, intellectually witty, to the same general effect. The great and spacious mind cannot skilfully disport itself in the limited area allowed for this brilliant display. The men who are always neat and always drest are usually, if not always, little men. The great man, in his minor activities, affects a negligent greatness and a careless ease. Burke had the spacious mind, and in his strong arm he wielded the broad claymore, but the weapon of wit is the pointed rapier ; and the man who is expert in its thrust is unfamiliar with great ideas, or epical designs, or imperial responsibilities.

Wit has never been successfully defined. Pope placed it in excellence of Expression, 'nature to advantage dressed.' Another idea of those Addisonian days was the kindred one that wit was the expression of what was true without being obvious, that it imparted the charm of novelty and grace to familiar thought. But when we recall the varieties of satire or mirth that flourished in the two generations dating from Dryden's attack on Shaftesbury we must feel the impossibility of a definition that will include and designate them all. Wit is at once a compression of intellect and a sport of fancy. It combines thought and play. Now it is this second aspect that is not readily natural to minds that are habitually lofty and serious. They too require their relaxation. They must occasionally unbend. They are tempted to join with others in an art that wins the average mind as children are won by a brilliant display of fireworks. But the manner is not quite congenial, and the exhibition suffers from stiffness and weight. The temptation is greatest in oratory, where the arts of popular appeal are in requisition, and the devices of banter and raillery must alternate with the heavier artillery of invective and scorn. In this respect Burke employs, more frequently even than Swift, the weapon of irony ; but not always with the same success. In the *Reflections* there are a hundred examples some of them highly effective, others

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slightly obscure. In several cases it is not clear whether the phraseology is ironical or not. Most of these belong to the oratorical aspect of the work; and in public speaking the irony, the banter, or the scorn is punctuated by the tones of the living voice. In pure literature it seems a requirement of wit that the thought shall not be overcharged with emotion. When such sensibility as belonged to Burke is aroused the sphere of wit is superseded. Neither in his indignation nor in his sublimity is there scope for that play of fancy which gives to the leisured reader a quiet intellectual enjoyment. But Burke more than others of his type was eager, ardent, hasty and impetuous; and flashes of lasting wit spring from the mind that is undisturbed by anxieties and habituated to intervals of repose.

But, after all, the essential element in wit is intellect; and, in another though non-popular sense, Burke's writings are full of it. They are full, that is to say, of condensed and epigrammatic wisdom. Those fine phrases such as "men of light and leading" or "the cheap defence of nations;" those rich apophthegms, such as "Kings will be tyrants from policy when subjects are rebels on principle," are examples of what may be called high and serious wit, and they possess not only the substance thereof but also the elaboration of sound and form. Here in these grave epigrams we find an element common to the sagacity of Bacon, the sublimity of Milton, and the lofty seriousness of Burke. The form of wit is transferred from the region of sport to that of profound and permanent wisdom. It is altogether a degenerate use of the term which limits wit to flashing epigram and gay effusion and pointed jest or satire; or which counts surprise the only appropriate emotion. Wit is essentially force of brain. In literature it shows itself in the combination of wisdom and brevity; and we must look for it not only in flashing jewels of phrase, and surprising turns of thought, but also in the less effulgent bars

of solid gold that command our approval and admiration.

In the secondary sense of wit we find in Burke many of those surprising or contradictory expressions, daring oxymorons, startling epigrams, satirical compliments, ironical inferences, that the orator employs to arrest attention. They are there in abundance; but often without sufficient distinctness of meaning and intention to be immediately effective. For what is true of Burke's wisdom generally is true of these minor details—there is more of intellect than fancy and more of gravity than sport; and, in consequence, they are received without delight.

Akin to wit is the element of Humour, in which also Burke is defective; but again in his strenuous and ardent struggles we do not look for that prolongation of genial pleasure which the unattached man of letters has leisure to create. The novelist can invent the situations, and construct the characters, and draw out the picture, of inconsistencies and oddities and pleasing follies that give an intense and refined amusement. The culture of such emotions, especially in combination with so serious a temperament, was impossible in the career of Burke. What elements of humour are to be found in the *Reflections* are rather of an opposite kind; in the restrained ridicule which he sometimes heaps on the impossible schemes and childish devices of the pretentious reformers of France. The pictures of Peter's triumphing, of the serious acceptance of Rousseau, of the faith in the repetition of *assignats*, or of the surprise at the failure of finances or the excesses of the army, these and other examples of mockery show that Burke was quite capable of a ludicrous exposure. But, in the high and solemn themes with which he dealt, indignation and not ridicule seemed the just and appropriate emotion.

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It is too often glibly said of great men, such as Milton, or Wordsworth, or Burke, that they were devoid of humour; the critic having no doubt of his own accomplishment therein. But before this deficiency is made a reproach let it be shown that the quality of humour is essential to the high exercise of mind. It is possible that men may be devoid of that which they are above. Who, on the emotional side, was ever more richly endowed than Milton or Burke? Either of them could have cultivated any or every mode of feeling. But they lived amidst great events, when the state was storm-tossed, and they were summoned to advise; and in their private meditations their minds soared on eagle wing. Living in the eye of the world they preserved a dignity and even majesty in their thought and utterance. In such circumstances there is little scope for the lighter graces, the gayer moods, and the more pleasing play of life. In the galaxy of letters each star shines with its own quality of light. The completeness of glory is in the combined effect of all. But if one shines with a lustre that sometimes dazzles and overpowers we are not to conclude that it does not contain, concealed within its brightness, that milder radiance which in some nearer planet imparts a more pleasing sensation of warmth or companionship.

If we think of the main kinds or modes of composition we note that it is in the expository and the persuasive that Burke excels. Had he continued his projected History he would have bequeathed a great and valuable work, but it would have shown neither the easy and rapid narration of Macaulay nor the picturesque and vivid descriptive sketches of Carlyle. Burke would have traced effects to causes, would have analysed the motives of statesmen, would have presented summaries of the march and complications of events, and would have shown the abiding lessons of history. His work

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would have in method more closely resembled Bacon's Henry VII. than Macaulay's William III.; but it would have covered centuries, and would have interpreted to later times the spirit of the earlier history. Parliamentary experience made his manner more argumentative and oratorical, more eager to convince than to instruct. Nevertheless the purely expository and instructive element is to be found in all his works. In the *Reflections* we may refer to his handling of the English Revolution, of the rise of civilization in days of chivalry, of the purpose of church establishments, of the character of the noblesse and clergy of France. And still more remarkable in respect of constitutional knowledge and complicate capacity, though less important as literature and less accurate in detail, are the sections dealing with the Legislature and the Army and the financial situation in France. Nor is there one of these sections that is not enhanced or uplifted by some broad and valuable generalisation. Burke is an expositor with the mind of a philosopher.

As regards general effects it may suffice to quote the judicious sentences of Lord Morley :

In all its varieties Burke's style is noble, earnest deep-flowing because his sentiment was lofty and fervid, and went with sincerity and ardent disciplined travail of judgment. . . . Burke had the style of his subjects, the amplitude, the weightiness, the laboriousness, the sense, the high flight, the grandeur proper to a man dealing with imperial themes, the freedom of nations, the justice of rulers, the fortunes of great societies, the sacredness of law. Burke will always be read with delight and edification because in the midst of discussions on the local and the accidental he scatters apophthegms that take us into the regions of lasting wisdom. In the midst of the torrent of his most strenuous and passionate deliverances, he suddenly rises aloof from his immediate subject, and in all tranquillity reminds us of some permanent relation of things, some enduring truth of human life or society.

In Burke, by virtue of his powerful imagination, there returned to English literature what is known as the grand style. Efforts in this direction arose in the Elizabethan period, and the most striking results in form were perhaps reached in Hooker and Taylor and Milton, and in occasional passages of Bacon and Raleigh and Browne. In all of these there was the element of poetic fancy, combined with an intricacy of structure and a copiousness of expression derived from the study of classical models. From the period of the Restoration, which marked the establishment of scientific and practical ways of thinking, this elaboration was laid aside; and methods of simplicity and directness were pursued by all. Dryden was the first master of the new school; and his energetic and easy utterance was followed by the less vigorous but more refined and witty and popular style of Addison, which for two generations was the model of fine writing. Johnson calls this the middle style, being intermediate between the familiar and the grand. The charm of this style was in its elegance, to which all the arts of gaiety or grace contributed, and in its adaptation to the new and rapidly increasing body of readers amongst the middle classes of the country. This style in its perfection is seen in Goldsmith; but Johnson himself attempted a more ambitious manner, more complex in structure and more sonorous in utterance. Burke followed, but his masters, if he had any, were those that preceded Johnson; or if he learned from his contemporary sage it was from the conversation that surpassed, both in ease and vigour, the earlier and more pompous style. The balanced style of Johnson is, indeed, abundant in Burke; but less obtrusively, because the complex sentence is, in the interests of rapidity and force, broken into two or more short sentences. The imaginative splendour of Burke was a thing which no contemporary possessed. Burke studied Bolingbroke; who ranks amongst the greater masters of this middle style, and imparted to it

something of aristocratic gaiety and polish. But it is said that Dryden, the father of all the modern literature, was to Burke, as he was to Fox, the chief model and guide. Nevertheless Burke with his oratorical fervour and wide study attempted a loftier flight; and, especially in his later writings, exhibited that greater manner to which the first half of the nineteenth century looked back as the high water mark of English prose. Johnson and Gibbon and Burke were the three that made the reign of George III. illustrious in prose. And the two books, the *Lives of the Poets* and the *Reflections*, have done more than all others to form the manner of the Nineteenth Century. The "supreme writer" said De Quincey, who could not only admire but carry forward to finer excellence. The oratorical side is reproduced in Robert Hall, the greatest, from the point of view of literary excellence, of English preachers. Something of the political and social philosophy was imbibed both by Wordsworth and Coleridge; and the latter was, in the next generation, perhaps the chief interpreter and continuator of Burke. The political side was carried forward by Mackintosh and Hallam and Macaulay. Many others derived one thing or another from the capacious fountain. And we see the spell that Burke still casts over one so different from himself in fundamental thought as is Lord Morley. None of these that have followed has however the energy, the spacious and capacious comprehensiveness of mind that belonged to this master, and none of them, except De Quincey in his dreams and imaginative fancies, has essayed the same lofty flights. The accumulation of ideas and arguments, the stately succession of weighty thoughts, the soaring imagination, the elaborated climax, the reverential sentiment, or the torrent of invective—these, continued in a rapid succession of volumes for over a quarter of a century, and in a splendour of which the gorgeousness increased unto the end, must give him a permanent predominance over predecessors and

successors. To us he occupies the central point or period of the two centuries and a half that have passed since the Restoration; and he is vitally related both to what preceded him and to what followed. His fundamental ideas both of moral prudence and of social relationship, and his mode of thinking and writing, belong to the century before him of which he is intellectually the consummation. And although to the future he contributed no direction of onward movement yet the rich reservoir of his speeches and writings has been a fountain of light and of guidance to many that, in changed circumstances, have had to study or to direct the life of society and the affairs of state. In the stiff dignity of the aristocratic epoch, and with robes of gorgeous splendour, he stands erect; warning us against the application of untried ingenuity to problems of civic life, and instructing us to regard with reverential awe that social fabric which, strengthened with continuous adaptation and purified through ages of trial, has come to us, in a unity of life and history, from its mystic source in the bosom of a distant and unknown antiquity.

## CAUSES AND DETAILS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

The French Revolution is the designation of a series of events that took place in France between 1789 and 1795. The movement began with large and generous ideas, and with glad and ardent hopes. But the difficulties, and complications and counteractions of public life grew and thickened and multiplied around the inexperienced steersmen ; and, before a settled condition was arrived at, the direction fell more and more into the hands of extremists, men immoral, theftuous, reckless, shameless, who literally revelled in blood and abomination, and amply fulfilled the darkest expectations of astonished onlookers. The climax was reached in the year 1793 ; which began with the execution of the King, and in the subsequent months saw many thousands of the best men in France wantonly guillotined. The reign of Terror reached its height in August, but the sensation remained until in July 1794 the last of the devourers were themselves devoured. Conflict and constitution-building still went on, until the Moderates got the upper hand, and affairs were committed to a Directory (November 1795) which for four years governed weakly and corruptly till the situation was ripe for the regime of Buonaparte. And so through the purifying transmigrations of Burke's alarmed vision France passed, with successions of awful experience, from one century into another, and into new conditions of the activities and relationships of mankind.

Burke's *Reflections* on this Revolution were published at the beginning of November 1790 and were mainly written within the first year of reconstruction, before the worst thunder clouds had darkened the sky. His book was the work of one who had read and meditated long and deeply on the affairs of civil life; and who saw in the smiling faces of the rash reformers the clear impress of folly that would soon transform itself into crime. With that first stage alone we are now concerned; and with the consideration of the conditions or causes that led up to it.

To state the causes, and to state them with the right emphasis or proportion, is a task in the execution of which the best thinkers still differ. The causes are hidden in a history of 250 years, the whole of which has to be studied; and in such a world of material the major forces are not easily determinable. Burke, in this book, directs special attention to the rise of two new classes—the men of letters and the men of stocks—and in the combination of these he finds the most effective element. But in this, though he is referring mainly to the Confiscation, he is probably wrong. His conclusions are largely based on his experiences when in the winter of 1773-74 he spent some weeks in France. Then he noted forces at work, which impressed his sensitive imagination. But to dwell exclusively on these is to ignore both the immediate and the ultimate causes. The immediate causes derive themselves from the American War of Independence; the ultimate causes belong to the epoch of the Reformation and the successful stifling of Protestantism; while between them is a disintegrating movement, in the two spheres of religion and social organisation, which went on through the seventy years that followed the death (in 1715) of the great monarch, as Louis XIV. was called. The fundamental fact was the triumph of the Papacy, followed in due course by the firm establishment of absolute Monarchy. France in

the sixteenth century lost many intelligent subjects who migrated to other lands where their consciences were free; and she lost many in bloody death. But it is in other untraceable ways of mind and thought and intellectual habit and moral life and social activity and constitutional assertion and spiritual courage that forces imperceptibly work by which national character is transformed and the powers of united action for moral or political progress may be entirely lost. Henry IV., while acquiescing in Catholicism, granted to his country an Edict of toleration; and, if his spirit had survived, France would have continued the greatest of nations. But after him movement was retrograde. The ascendant church continued to persecute. The States-general were allowed to disappear. And for a long time all power, in that group of nationalities called France, was concentrated in the government of Versailles. In England simultaneously we see the same tendencies. The French queen of Charles I. encouraged him to rival the absolutism of the court from which she came. And it was the Protestantism and Puritanism of Britain that alone braced and sustained the energies of the people in the struggle which ended in the banishment of the Stuarts. France in the seventeenth century was irradiated with the double glory of literature and conquest. But the heart was becoming hollow, and the Monarch, the spirit of whose policy is contained in his maxim—the State, I am the State—at last revoked the Edict of Nantes and completed the triumph of that organisation to which Voltaire attached the memorable epithet “accursed.” But the policy of William and the war of Marlborough punctured the French shield; and with a bloated National Debt the wearied sovereign declined in glory as in strength.

The new critical spirit manifested itself from about 1720. The *Persian Letters* of Montesquieu (1721) and the subsequent satires of Voltaire were eagerly read; and the envy of the English constitution began. New

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theories of the state of nature, and the social contract, and of political reorganisation, were freely uttered before the *Encyclopædia* came into light and while Rousseau was still an infant. The progress of science and enlightenment was seen to be incompatible with the narrow teaching of an ill-instructed priesthood. There were eminent and numerous exceptions, both in intelligence and in liberality, but the authority of the Church was waning. And this tendency was strengthened during those twenty years, in which the first vast encyclopædia of thought and knowledge, the fruits of laborious study and enterprise, were being given to the world. But it is a mistake to suppose that the encyclopædist—Diderot, D'Alembert, Helvetius, Holbach—were the active causes of the Revolution, or that they ever affected the masses of the people. In the first place they were not politicians; what they did was to give a greater vogue to rationalism, and to establish in their circle a utilitarian code of ethics in which the deeper foundations and the nobler developments of morality were alike unrecognised. But besides these four there were other types of thinkers, and many writers, who had an equal or greater influence. In the Church itself the antagonism of Jesuit and Jansenist had been injurious to the old state of things. The translation of the writings of Locke operated for half a century; for he was the inspirer of Rousseau and Diderot as well as of the earlier writers. The *Letters on the English* by Voltaire 1734 were a sort of opening manifesto in the attack on French establishments; and that most witty and versatile of writers, the author of seventy volumes, reached and roused an audience incomparably more numerous than what the deeper philosophers, singly or collectively, could command. Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws* (1748) was a work for thoughtful men, in which lessons were drawn from the histories of many nations; and unstinted praise was given to the balanced and apportioned constitution of England.

The great treatise, though in many parts erroneous, and in the light of present knowledge commonplace, was at the time fresh, suggestive, directive; and it wielded enormous influence. But at a much earlier date the Abbé de Saint-Pierre had preached the perfectibility of man; and he was the chief spirit of the first important French Club—the *Club de l' Entresol*—in which several reformers and politicians enlarged their ideas and sharpened their wits. The result was that before 1760 reverence for authority was gone; and Lord Chesterfield, visiting France, as early as 1753 pronounced that things were ripening for a revolution.

No violent revolution was ever necessary; but the generation immediately preceding the actual outburst devoted itself still more earnestly to the study of social and economic questions. The repetition of wars aggravated burdens, and any one could have seen that a new distribution of power and responsibility and financial obligation would be required at a no distant future. About 1757 was formed the school of Economists, named by some one else the physiocrats, who next to Montesquieu were effective in directing the attention of France to such questions. The chief founder was Quesnay, with whom was associated an eccentric nobleman, the Marquis of Mirabeau, self-styled the "friend of man," still more famous as the father of the one great genius of the revolution. Quesnay's *Economic Table* was published in 1758; and the doctrines were developed by Dupont of Nemours who published in 1763 *Reflections on the Riches of the Nation* and was long an active journalist expounding his theories, and by Mercier de la Rivière who in 1767 published the completest treatise of the school, entitled *the Natural and Essential order of Political Societies*. Their chief doctrines were that, instead of the existing complicated and burdensome and irksome fiscal system, one large tax should be collected from the net-returns of the land, and that a greater share of the

net produce should be returned to productive expenditure in connection with, and in support of, the agriculture to which it was due. Something of this teaching is to be found in Burke's *Reflections*. The Economists were able to influence government through the rise of a politician instructed in their school and imbued with their ideas, Turgot, the one great French statesman of the eighteenth century. Turgot was Comptroller-general (or finance minister) from 1774 the year of the accession of Louis XVI. to 1776; and he removed the Corn Laws and made many reforms in accordance with the principles of his school; but too soon the reaction came, and the salvation of France was undone. Later than these, appeared other writers of a similar kind; of whom Morelli, author of the *Code of Nature*, who may be regarded as the first of the modern socialists and communists, and Mably, who attributed all evil to the individual ownership of land, are the chief. In these we see the tendency of speculation to branch into extremes.

But the writer who exercised more influence than all the philosophers put together, and who was in fact the apostle of the Revolution, was Jean Jacques Rousseau. Men are governed (as Disraeli once said) not by logic but by rhetoric; and this the great sentimentalist supplied. His first publication was a prize essay arguing that intellectual progress had corrupted morals. Then he published in 1753 his *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, in which the crude doctrine of the state of Nature was commended. But his most important political book, and the book of the Revolution, was his *Social Contract* 1760. The chief doctrine of this work was the sovereignty of the People—that body who entered into the compact—, and the modern doctrines of representative Government and delegated sovereignty were distinctly repudiated. But how fifty or a hundred millions can exercise a continuous sovereignty would appear to be a problem beyond the wit of the most brilliant of Frenchmen.

This book was followed by *Letters from the Mountain* 1764, and *Considerations on the Government of Poland* 1772; both of which are reasonable enough. His other more famous works are of a literary character, the *Nouvelle Eloïse*, a sentimental novel in which the barriers of rank are denounced and which has been called the “gospel of emotion”, and *Emile* of which the substance is theory of education—a book based on Locke’s Treatise on Education as the *Contract Social* is based on Locke’s Treatises on Government. Along with his strictly political writing is to be put his article on *Economy* in the *Encyclopædia* where his theory of the Sovereign State, and of the moral character thereof, is asserted.

Rousseau’s influence, although it is unintelligible apart from the assumption of a national degeneracy of mind, is partly due to his literary qualities. He gave copious and impassioned expression to vague ideas that were floating in the crude minds of half-educated multitudes in France. He was the child of his age, with an inclination to paradox. He was not the creator of sensibility and sentimentalism ; for the fountain head was Richardson the English novelist ; but he did more than any other to increase and diffuse the fashionable mode. So he helped to promote the new taste for the simple or the country life. The sensational character of many of his statements—especially of his theory of equality and his state of nature—were written with no dream that a generation later that principle of equality would be accepted and put in practice by active politicians. Other statements regarding the Divine right of the people, and the propriety of giving immediate expression to popular anger, were such as justified, if they did not suggest, many of the cruel deeds of the Revolution. But in general his conceptions are of an ideal world, and of abstract rights that are argued without reference to the circumstances of any particular administration. The extraordinary thing is that these abstract theorisings became the

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doctrinal truths of the promoters of the Revolution. And it is this presumption of inexperience and rashness that has provoked some of the strongest pages of Burke's *Reflections*. Again Rousseau was not an infidel, nor was the darkest of his disciples, Robespierre. On the contrary his sentimental and romantic style of thought aided the revival of religion and the restoration of clerical power. No doubt next in influence to Rousseau, in respect not of theories but of spirit, was Voltaire, who though not an atheist had been an enemy of the church. And the spoliation against which Burke so loudly protests would never, in its actual degree or manner, have taken place had the mocking satirist not written. Both Voltaire and Rousseau were men of letters, not men of thought; and their effect was in the end enormous. But of the materialistic philosophers, such as Holbach and Helvetius, it may be confidently asserted that on the Revolution and its course their influence was insignificant.

Briefly it may be said that a state of mind arose in France in which the sentiment of reverence was lost. Government was discredited by its failures, its extravagance, its oppressiveness, its struggles with the Parlements. The Church lost respect through its persecutions and its opposition to knowledge. Men ceased to believe in Divine things. At the same time speculation on Government and on Society arose and increased. Men began to dream of perfectibility and regeneration. Communistic theories were suggested. And a growing number were ready and eager to put in practice the imaginary schemes and systems of which they deemed themselves the original and enlightened discoverers.

The more immediate causes of the Revolution arose out of the American War of Independence. France interposed in that struggle between England and her colonists; and sent fleets and armies to aid the separation. It was in America that La Fayette and some others won

their honours. The consequence for France was twofold : the imbibing by her people of the theories of republicanism, and the aggravation of financial complications and difficulties by the great addition to her Debt. The doctrine of the rights of man, which Burke dissects and repudiates, was derived from the Declaration of Independence ; and the spectacle of a new free people whom she had helped to form touched the imagination and the pride of France. The ultimate success of the colonists aroused French enthusiasm, and necessarily also it awakened the desire to share similar privileges. This was one side ; the other was in practice more serious. The cost of the war to France was at least fifty millions sterling, and has been estimated as high as sixty millions. This was an addition to a people who already had annual deficits. The difficulties might have been tided over by economy and skill. But here again the jealousies and vanities of politicians and courtiers intervened. The dismissal of Necker in 1781 was followed by the abandonment of his stricter economy, by fresh borrowings on a large scale, and by new taxes. To some of these taxes the Parlement of Paris objected, refusing to register them as permanent imposts. The first definite step of a novel kind was the summoning of a Council in Notables in 1786. Calonne was finance minister, and had formed a general plan of dealing with the situation. To the new Council the actual situation and the new proposals were made known ; but the Notables were informed that what was expected of them was not independent judgment but assistance in carrying out the new scheme. They objected to the proposed land tax and to methods generally ; and no progress was made. In April 1787 Calonne, who showed considerable ability, was dismissed ; and in May, on the advice of his successor, Lomènie Brienne, the Council of Notables was dissolved. This meeting of a Council naturally suggested a still greater one. And on the 19th July, in a debate between the finance minister and the objecting

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parlement, a member of the latter used the ominous words—not states of finance but the States-General is what we need. The parlement proceeded to assert that only the States-General could sanction a permanent tax. These declarations were heard with enthusiasm. From all France arose a demand for the summoning of the states. And whereas the Council of Notables had been aristocratic and conservative it was demanded that in the new body the popular element should predominate. Promises, delays, negotiations, arrangements, followed, with no firm, steady, controlling hand. Forces are easily aroused which are with difficulty controlled. And it was in the concessions to organised popular clamour that the French Monarchy made blunders which were irretrievable and ruinous.

Financial matters were not conducted in France with the scientific precision of today. There were no budgets, or annual public statements and votes. The affairs of the nation were conducted on the lines of ordinary business, with records of receipts and payments and calculations; but in the complications that arose with loans and borrowings and temporary devices the finance minister was often ignorant of the actual state of affairs; and the public statements were usually sanguine and defective. Amongst the resources or revenue of Government were the following. The lands or feudal property of the Crown, from which was derived the *taille*, included about one fifth of the land of France. From this, at the time of the Revolution, about ninety one million livres were annually derived. It was fixed and raised arbitrarily. Persons of high position, magistrates, officials of the Court, professors of the Universities and many others were exempt. Corporations had compounded. The result of the desire to escape was, that while needs increased this source decreased. It was also a check on industry, as men to avoid it avoided enterprise. The *Capitation* was a tax on the head of every household. It was paid

by high and low, on different scales. The clergy paid, instead, a free gift, revised every five years and fixed, in 1755 and thereafter, at sixteen millions. Towns and certain provinces made an annual subscription. The capitation yielded fifty-six millions. The *vingtième*, or twentieth penny, was, like the preceding, a modern tax, due to the frequency and expense of war. It began in 1710, and after some cessations was in 1749 made permanent, and in 1760 it was fixed at about one-sixth of income. Here again there were subscriptions and redemptions; and the privileged classes evaded strict assessment. It yielded seventy or eighty millions. The *aids* were excise duties, levied on spirits and various manufactures. The *customs* were tolls levied on goods in passage from district to district. The Government collected in the passage between provinces; but Municipal tolls were innumerable. There were multitudes of special taxes, of which the most irksome was the *gabelle* or salt tax. This tax varied in districts; as did also the price of salt. But all persons were supposed to require a certain amount; and thereon, whether they purchased it or not, they were taxed. There were exemptions; there was much of smuggling; and there was great harshness in the collection. The produce was about sixty millions. These taxes were much severer than what we usually now see; and things were made worse by the farming system of collection, which was often accompanied by dishonesty and oppression. But France was by no means a poor or unprosperous country; and a skilful redistribution might have removed all difficulties. The great evil was privilege: a term which applies not only to the nobility but to all who held official appointments. And wealthy men sought these numerous appointments in order to evade their responsibilities to the nation. The general consequence was that taxes oppressed the poor, and checked throughout the country the spirit of industrial enterprise and the means of national progress.

There were of course many grievances, in the general administration and condition, though not such as goad men to active resistance. The government was centralised and bureaucratic and secret. Large divisions, called generalities, were ruled by autocratic Intendants, and no local government intervened between them and the small units. Government was capricious, continually over-ruling fixed principles or methods by changes of the royal or official will. Little was done to initiate or to encourage important improvements. One province was different from another; and in all of them medieval customs, and burdens of feudalism, still lingered. The system of jurisdiction was complicated by the enormous number and variety of courts and of modes of appeal. In the church there was an unnecessary number of highly paid bishops, while the mass of the clergy had insufficient incomes. In the army also there was undue proportion of officers of high rank, while the ordinary soldiers were badly paid. Some cities had become wealthy and splendid, but it was a grievance to the leading citizens that they had no share in the government. The great mass of the population was employed in agriculture; and two-fifths of the land belonged to the Third Estate. In some parts the peasantry were comfortable and in others not. But every where there were hampering and irritating rules and restrictions; and service in the militia was an oppressive interference. There was a numerous nobility, which included all born within it and could be increased by the purchase of offices. But this nobility played no part of its own in the life of the country. Their privileges gave offence, and their prejudices prevented means of self-improvement. One of the most notorious grievances was the frequent deprivation of personal liberty, by the system of *lettres de cachet*; a method employed not only in cases of political offence but even for purposes of domestic discipline. Religious persecution was infrequent, but there were still occasional cases of ferocity. In many respects

France had never learned to respect the rights of the individual.

There were therefore, apart from the troubles of finance, innumerable questions in regard to which it was necessary to adapt the condition of France to the requirements of modern life. A wave of reforming enthusiasm passed over the country, and carried with it the whole population. Regeneration was the word. A strong and clear-eyed central government might have guided the movement to great results. But for this end firm control was necessary. The ardent deputies were eager to accomplish in one year the work of ten. A new system of finance requires years to bring in its full results; but the Assembly were not prepared for deficits, and their rashness intensified matters by the disorganisations they produced. Resolutions and edicts followed in rapid succession. The old order was upset, and little reverence was shown for king, or noble, or priest. Journalists and lawyers who had learned the theory of equality, though they knew little of life, and who condemned the actions of others while little virtue was practised amongst themselves, had no scruples in their actions and no doubts regarding their own powers and rights. It was this irreverent desecration on the one hand, and the gathering confusion on the other, that with strained eyes Burke watched from across the channel. Something of similar dissatisfaction he knew to exist in England, and he feared the contagion of destructive fury. In England too there had been a disintegrating philosophy, and new theories of social and political advance, and prophecies of revolution. And the Wilkes and Lord George Gordon cases showed that in the populace there were riotous elements. And men of intellect such as Price and Priestley were effusively welcoming the excesses of the French Revolution. Burke lost judicial calm, though not judicial clearness of vision. He trembled for the Church which he loved and venerated, and for the delicate balance of the Constitution. He trembled also

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for the ideas of chivalry and public honour; and like a knight-errant of old he was eager to avenge the wrongs of the innocent.

The year 1788 passed with promises and proposals, with awakenings throughout the country and revivals of provincial estates, and with humiliating contests between the ministry and the parlement of Paris. On 8th August it was decreed that the States-general should meet on 1st May 1789, and, in anticipation thereof, contemplated reforms were deferred. On 25th August Archbishop Brienne, who since April 1788 had been finance minister, and who, though ambitious and plausible, had shown himself unequal to the task which Calonne had been compelled to abandon, resigned; and once more Necker was recalled, with the enhanced dignity of the title of Secretary of State. Necker was a man, who, though neither a noble nor a Catholic, had from his technical knowledge of finance, which few of the statesmen of Versailles possessed even in a moderate degree, been able to force his way to a foremost place in the administration. Had he, in former years, been rightly supported the crisis might have been averted. Now the emergency required not only skilful administration but qualities of statesmanship which Necker did not possess. The mobs were getting out of hand; the parlement was giving trouble, at once thwarting the government and opposing the trend of popular movement. Absorbing questions were raised regarding the manner of the elections and still more regarding single or double representation of the Third Estate, separate or united sittings, and vote by orders or by heads. Government should have either cordially accepted the democratic idea, or should have firmly resisted. They temporised, unconscious of the situation, and when yielding lost the credit thereof. The province of Dauphiné took the lead, and resolved that their Estates should consist of commoners, nobles and clergy in the proportions of 72, 48 and 24 respectively. Other places

were moving similarly. Necker weakly summoned the Notables to advise. They met in November, took the conservative side, injured themselves and the Minister, and in December were dissolved. When the elections took place neither king, nor ministers, nor parlements, nor notables, nor any established institution, was regarded by the people with respect.

The elections were conducted according to the indirect and successive manner described in the *Reflections*. Communes voted for cantons, and these for Departments, and these for the ultimate Assembly. The methods were not quite uniform, but such was the general idea. In the first Estate almost every clergyman had a vote, though with devices and qualifications that were intended to favour or to further the claims of the more dignified. In the Second Estate every noble (over twenty five) had a vote, and in the Third the great body of the people. There were those slight qualifications over which Burke makes merry because they limit the "rights of man." And it was hoped that the gradation would secure the choice of men of respectable position. The numbers elected were—of the first estate 308, of nobles 285, and in the third estate 621. Various questions now rose in the tumult of popular demand. They were questions of policy, questions of power, and questions of the manner of exercise. One great peculiarity of the system was the *cahiers*, or lists of grievances and requirements, referred to by Burke under the name instructions. To state grievances and to petition for improvements was the chief purpose of the old Estates. They were not invested with legislative power, but were chiefly desired as aids to Government in its need. Members of the Estates were deputies or agents sent to report, not members as in England of a sovereign body. This method of preparing instructions, or programmes of reform, went on all over France in the early part of 1789. Nobles and clergymen in their districts drew up *cahiers* which their deputies were directed to present. In the

Third Estate there was a sifting process between the lower and the intermediate assemblies. In all this process there was the usual activity of managers, wirepullers and spokesmen; and something of a general programme was accepted all over France. At this stage reformers were perhaps more influenced by the maxims of Montesquieu than by the ravings of Rousseau. They desired the hereditary monarchy of the house of Bourbon. They desired regular meetings of the Estates, not to be dissolved without consent. While the King was the head of the Executive the Estates were to determine the taxes, to vote supply, and to control the machinery of loans. Here they had England in view, and they also followed the English model in assigning legislation to the sovereign and the states jointly. From this programme they essentially departed when the National Assembly was constituted as one and supreme, and when its resolutions were declared edicts and turned into laws. Burke is correct in saying that this, and all their subsequent policy, was without authority and without right. But the vacillating monarchy must bear a share of the blame thereof. It is a feature of revolutions that men are hurried from step to step, that suspicions and animosities arise, that schemes of matured wisdom are of little account, and that no one knows what a day will bring forth.

Their next constitutional demand was a complete blunder. They required the separation of the legislative and executive powers. This is a theory, and a mistaken one. In England the ministers sit in Parliament, and lead the Houses, and guide deliberations, and direct legislation, and control the Constitution, and keep Parliament in touch with the whole activities of Government at home and abroad. These ministers are of course tried and experienced men, and the cement of the system is mutual confidence. When policy is disapproved the whole question is adjusted by the resignation of Government, and the succession of other ministers,

that accord with the majority or the prevailing mood. But in France the raw politicians imagined that they were to sit in judgment on the great officials ; though the judges had not the necessary knowledge nor the officials the means of explanation and defence. The exclusion of the ministers from the Assembly was a wrong done to the Assembly as much as to the ministers, and a fundamental error. It hastened the rapid deterioration and the reign of vanity. Again the reformers made no important suggestion for the organisation of the Executive. One of the secrets of successful Government is found in the cabinet system which, without legal recognition, has been gradually evolved in Britain, and is now largely imitated all over the world. This was not realised in France. The Estates of the nobles and clergy were instructed to uphold their separate existence, and to maintain ancient privileges, except in the matter of taxation. The Third Estate on the other hand were ordered to press for joint deliberation and vote by head. Burke of course, favours the former method which would have preserved an aristocratic constitution. But through defection amongst the clergy, and intimidation, and incompetence, the cause was lost. The method of combining nobles and clergy in an Upper Chamber which would have balanced the Lower House does not seem to have been considered. There was indeed a proposal to have a select Upper House of the higher clergy and nobles ; but that was clearly repugnant to prevailing ideas. And indeed neither nobles nor clergy were sufficiently respected to make any approach to the English method acceptable and successful. The instructions also comprised the revision and extension of Municipal and of provincial Governments, all being placed on an elective basis.

Apart from constitutional matters, the *cahiers* of the Third Estate required a large redress of grievances. They condemn nearly all existing taxes, and even assert their illegality. For they hold, as the Parlements

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encouraged them to do, that taxes could not be imposed without the consent of the Estates. The new taxes should be placed on land and property and luxuries and the profits of business or professions ; the collection should be made by provincial and Municipal assemblies ; and the system of farming should cease. The Third Estate were also to require the abolition of the relics of feudalism. Especially were the peasantry full of grievances regarding manorial rights and privileges. Their whole industry was hampered by monopolies in the hands of the landlords, by the right to enforce service of men or cattle, by the preservation of game and by various money payments. They complained bitterly of the militia service. The methods of prisons, and hospitals, and the prevalence of sloth and beggary required to be dealt with. The remnants of serfdom in the country, and the slave trade on the colonies, should be immediately abolished. Apart from specific grievances they asserted the rights of man, the freedom of conscience, the claim to unfettered careers in all departments of the public service. Nobles also should be free to engage in business and in professions now reckoned beneath them.

In these voluminous instructions the French people outlined a programme sufficient for twenty years of reform. It is true that the *cahiers* of the nobles were conservative, and those of the clergy too assertive of their own order. True also that the Government were unconscious of the state of affairs, and did not realise that radical reconstruction was needed. The situation required caution, patience, persistence, hopefulness and care. But on that Third Estate itself, which had such an opportunity of winning glory, must be laid an equal responsibility for the failure; inasmuch as, without the modesty that should accompany inexperience and without the judgment that could see the effects of actions, they moved recklessly forward, not disdaining the aid of insurrectionary soldiers and of riotous mobs.

On the 5th May 1789 the meeting of the States-general was opened by the king. The student will observe that up to this point nothing has happened which Burke condemns. He is indeed unnecessarily shocked by the composition of the Third Estate. The majority were lawyers, about 150 officials of courts and 210 barristers or attorneys. There were fifteen medical men and fifteen nobles, forty tenants of land and about 130 independent citizens. Amongst the clergy were two hundred ordinary priests, the majority of whom sympathised more with the people than with the dignitaries of their own profession. Now this predominance of lawyers and curés, in which Burke saw the seeds of ruin, was a necessity of existing conditions. The country was with the legal profession, the men of speech and cunning; and the ill-provided clergy naturally voted for deputies that were not elevated above a knowledge of their needs. But when such classes predominated it was essential that they should not have been invested with unlimited power. The beginnings were accompanied with unexampled expectation which even a foreigner shared so much as to say :

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive  
But to be young was very Heaven.

Necker's opening statement on the finances was disingenuous. It concealed much of the real deficit. No large policy was indicated, either in finance or in general affairs. The separateness of the Estates was assumed. No measures, and no methods of action, were proposed by government. It was not realised that the Estates had come to legislate. In the midst of disappointments the Third Estate resolved to adhere to the plan of joint deliberation and vote. The nobles by 188 to 47, and the clergy by 133 to 114, decided on separate verification, the first act of separate action. Here then was the first problem, producing at the commencement a deadlock: Conferences were attempted, and to some extent held. But the nobles were obstinate, and the intransigent commoners at last proceeded on 10th June

verification; and thereafter, contemptuously disregarding the others, resolved on 17th June, by a majority of 491 to 90 to style themselves the National Assembly. On the 27th the union of the three Estate was accomplished. This was the first act of the Revolution proper. One half the clergy were prepared to approve, but the nobles refused; and the king resolved on a royal sitting to lecture and coerce. In anticipation the deputies, finding their hall locked, met in a tennis court and took their memorable oath not to separate until the constitution was established. The king, following the wrong advice of Barentin, held his session and accomplished nothing. He had not the courage of resistance while on the other side intimidation was practised to compel clergymen and nobles to join the Assembly. In the first week of July the Assembly began their work, passing on the 3rd a resolution which assumed sovereign power, and on the 6th appointing a Committee with a view to the framing of the future Constitution. Very soon the evil genius of the king led him into new mistakes. His design was to dismiss Necker, and in view of attendant eventualities he began to concentrate troops. This alarmed the deputies, whose cause was at once taken up by the nation at large and, especially, by the city of Paris. The unprosperous state of the country favoured the Assembly, for distress abounded and bread riots were frequent. It was in these circumstances that the formation of a Guard of Paris was resolved on. And on the same day, June 11, the dismissal of Necker was announced. Immediately the excitement was intense. Paris was in insurrection. The new guard was rapidly formed for the protection of peaceable citizens. But on the 14th two attacks were made, of which the most important was the capture and fall of the Bastille. The Assembly addressed the king who, failing in firmness, recalled Necker and promised to disperse the troops. Meanwhile Paris and the Assembly had fraternised, and, in a meeting of Assembly deputies and Paris members, Bailly was chosen Mayor of Paris and

La Fayette commandant of the new National Guard. These appointments were followed by the creation of the Paris council or municipality and the rapid enrolment of the civic army. From this date began the first flight of nobles and the increase of disturbances in the provinces. The first stage of the Revolution was passed, the royal influence was shattered, and the assembly were adrift on what seemed a shoreless ocean.

In August began the series of resolutions which obliterated ancient history. On the 4th August one liberalising proposal after another was made, until the whole system of lingering feudalism was doomed to immediate extinction. The nobles on that day lost all their authority and much of their revenue. The condemnation of the *gabelle* and the *aides* (on the motion of the Archbishop of Aix) led to the cessation of payment (notwithstanding recommendations to the contrary) before a substitute could be found. The extraordinary thing was that this crowd of hasty resolutions in an ecstatic gathering had the immediate effect of law. On the 27th of the month the Declaration of the Rights of Man, which it took some weeks to frame, was adopted. This declaration was intended as preliminary to a statement of the new projected constitution. The Committee recommended a threefold form — a King with royal veto, a Senate and a House of Representatives; and this the Assembly proceeded to discuss. But on the 10th September 849 voted for a single Chamber against 89 for a Senate; while 122 declared themselves undecided. This was followed, the next day, by a vote allowing to the king by a majority of two to one, a suspensive, but not an absolute, veto. In both these resolutions the principles of the British Constitution were set aside in favour of the more radical ideas pertaining to Rousseau's theory of the sovereignty of the people. The Assembly made itself the sole legislature and the sovereign power.

If these resolutions of August and September mark the second stage the 5th of October opens a third. Burke has memorably described the horrors of the 6th when the

fierce outrages took place at Versailles, and the King and Queen were brought in a grotesque procession to Paris. Crowds gathered in Paris on the morning of the 5th, chiefly of women, many of whom were goaded by hunger. Incidentally they were directed to Versailles where they went in the evening. Lafayette who had not cared to prevent them hurried after, and reached Versailles at midnight. In the morning the riot broke forth, though the guards were able to prevent the wholesale slaughter of the King's body-guard. The King who had now lost all independence of action pleased the multitude by accompanying them to Paris, where he spent the remainder of his virtually imprisoned life. Nor was the assembly itself, which followed him to the capital, any longer free. Henceforward the Parisian mob dominated the situation ; and they in turn were inspired by the Jacobin club.

From this date attention was directed to the Church property. The question was brought forward on the 10th October by Talleyrand, the apostate priest, and Mirabeau moved a resolution that the lands, subject to provision for the clergy, were the property of the nation. This was made law on November 10th ; and in December a sale of lands was ordered and the issue of assignats was sanctioned. In February 1790 a law was passed for the cancelling of monastic vows and the suppression of monastic orders, and thus the numbers of the clergy were reduced. This turned the clergy of France and the Church of Rome against the Revolution ; but the Assembly went forward and framed its Civil Constitution of the Clergy, which was presented in May, decreed in July, and assented to by the King in August. This reduced the number of dioceses (one being fixed for each Department), reduced the parishes also, and reduced the higher stipends ; and made the whole system elective. Such drastic treatment, and especially the election by citizens of any type, naturally caused deep dissatisfaction and was met by considerable resistance. At the same time, through financial incapacity, the gain to national revenue was largely lost.

From the first meetings of the Estates the strange adventurer Mirabeau sprang into pre-eminence, and his death in April 1791 was the knell of the French monarchy. He moved with the Revolution, while attempting to control it; being almost as conscious as Burke of its errors, and of the rocks ahead. The mistake of the exclusion of Ministers from the Assembly was raised by him on November 6th 1789, but all parties in the Assembly distrusted the contrary proposal, regarding it with jealousy or suspicion. The result was that the principle excluding placemen from the Assembly was embodied in the Constitution. The same jealousy of the Executive was shown when the question of joining Spain in a war against Britain (on account of the Nootka Sound dispute) was mooted. The Assembly, ignoring the controversy, repudiated all wars of conquest, proceeded to discuss the validity of treaties, and asserted for itself exclusive power of negotiation and of making war or peace. The result of this and subsequent discussions was that the Assembly took upon itself the direction of foreign as well as of home affairs. Here again Mirabeau's leadership was rejected. One of the oddest events of 1790 was the great fete of the Federation on July 14th. In a huge amphitheatre built for the occasion, and before tens of thousands of onlookers, after a most imposing religious service, representatives of all France met together and took the oath of allegiance to the nation, the law, and the King. Most of the oaths of France were made to be broken; and this Federation was followed by a large corruption of the soldiery. But we have now nearly reached the limit of the events on which Burke made his first reflections. Troubles continued to increase. Not for another year was the new Constitution completed. Finally on September 3rd 1791, it was voted and on the 14th it received the royal seal. On the 30th September the National Assembly reached its end.

The national, or as it is called, the Constituent Assembly, was followed by its creation the Legislative Assembly, to which, according to one of the insane resolu-

tions, no member of the former was eligible. All troubles renewed themselves in the new gathering of novices. And the Legislative Assembly gave place, in the next autumn, to the more terrible Convention whose three years of dark and selfish intrigue are chequered by war abroad and horror at home. The Convention made France a republic, and prepared it for a military despotism. It left the foulest record of crime in the history of civilised mankind.

Burke's volume of *Reflections* on the Revolution is in form a Letter. While it partly arose out of discussions and propositions in England its form was suggested by correspondence with a friend in France. But indeed the epistolary form was an established literary mode, and one often used by Burke, though rarely if ever on the occasion of so full a dissertation. A different plan, Burke says, would have allowed a "more commodious division and distribution of the subject." Expository treatises usually handle their material under divisions and sub-divisions; or in parts, chapters and sections. A letter does not allow such theoretical analysis and artificial arrangements; but, on the other hand, it readily admits the freedom and variety which an author may desire to exercise. Further on Burke expresses his appreciation of this freedom of epistolary intercourse as contrasted with what he calls "formal method."

The convenience of this method was no new discovery. In writings that deal with public questions emerging in the course of events it is a natural and effective form. The reader is arrested by the style of direct address; and the writer, being prevented from abstruse or imaginative handling, is kept in touch with the mind of the reader. Especially is the method congenial to the orator, who has been accustomed to address assemblies or to direct his argument to the chairman of the House, and who is familiar with the figures and devices of direct appeal. Examples still arise, where the subject of discussion is a matter of public interest,

Usually an individual is addressed. Milton's *Arcopagitica* was addressed to the High Court of Parliament, and Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* to the King. Great variety of method is possible.

The form like most others arose in the ancient world. Its most remarkable application is in the New Testament. Some of the chief Epistles there are only in a secondary sense, letters. Their primary importance lies in the doctrinal and ethical teaching which was addressed in the first instance to central bodies, but on the understanding that it should be communicated to others and preserved for guidance in the future. With examples so notable it was inevitable that the form should be adopted in modern times. And where politics or the passions thereof were concerned its ready and effective character is at once felt. Swift stirred Ireland with his *Drapier Letters*. Contemporary with Burke's earlier political treatises were the *Letters of Junius* which though mere journalism were nominally addressed to individuals attacked. And the method of open letters still survives. Burke employed the epistolary style to a greater extent than any other writer of equal eminence. His first book, *the Vindication of Natural Society* was in the form of a letter to a lord. In the time of the American War he produced his *Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol* in which more correctly than in the *Reflections* the forms of personal address and public instruction are combined. Later the *Reflections* were followed by a *Letter to a Member of the National Assembly*. There are others on other themes. Finally he closed his literary life with four Letters on a *Regicide Peace*.

In the *Reflections* it is easy to mark a three-fold division and a succession of themes. In the first half things are looked at largely from their relation to British life; in the second half, almost exclusively, the subjects are French. In the final division they are wholly French. Some parts deal with principles and others with facts. In the case of the former, more especially, some analysis or exposition is given in the following pages.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE *REFLECTIONS*  
AND  
AN EXPOSITION OF THE LEADING PRINCIPLES.

In the opening section (Para. 1-18) Burke indicates the occasion rather than the subject-matter of his Book. Personal explanations are given; and the doings of two English clubs, are made the point of departure of his argument. This, unless it is a purely argumentative device, implies that he is more concerned with English questions than with French. The clubs are, as he says, obscure, and might have been beneath the notice of so eminent a statesman. But the Sermon of Price affords a convenient starting point for the discussion of the exact character of the English Revolution; and it gives him an opportunity not only of overthrowing specious arguments but of overwhelming with contempt the men who have entered into communication with, and received expressions of gratitude from, the revolutionaries of France. Burke severely censures the misuse of the pulpit for political purposes, as illustrated by Price to-day and by Peters of old, and he ridicules the folly of noblemen that are found in the same association. But in the centre of the section are two paragraphs in which a key-note of the book, and of Burke's writings generally, is struck. With these (Para. 10-11) the argument may be said to begin, and to the same theme he, in the same spirit, returns at the close of the volume. His words may be paraphrased or summarised as follows:

"Liberty is as dear to me as it is to any man in the ranks of radicalism; and my strenuous life has been largely spent in the defence thereof. But by liberty I mean not licence or sentiment,

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but a true and manly liberty on the basis of morality and order. If another nation enters into larger liberty I do not envy or grudge the boon. But I cannot respond to a mere rumour of the attainment of freedom. I must see and know, before I stand forth to blame or praise. Liberty is an aspect of human conditions and conduct. And I must know the conduct and conditions before I judge. Some men look at the question philosophically, concerning themselves with words or ideas and not with realities. Their thoughts are abstract or ideal, and are not directed to the actual bearing of the matter on human life and happiness. But, in fact, it is this aspect that determines the value of every political principle. The same type of liberty may be beneficial in one country and injurious in another. It depends on circumstances; that is to say, on the character of the people, and the mode of application, and attendant conditions. These circumstances determine the manner in which the principle operates, and the special effect which in any particular case it produces. In the abstract many things are good; government, for example. But I cannot congratulate a people on the possession of government unless I know the character of the government, and something of the method of administration. So also of freedom. Because freedom is, in idea, a good am I to congratulate escaped madmen or robbers? To do so is to play the eccentric part of the sorrowful Don Quixote.

Liberty in actual display is a strong force which has to be watched. When it is newly bestowed there is an effervescence, and we must wait till that commotion subsides. By and bye we can discover the permanent quality of that which has been set free. Then, when we are sure that a benefit has been conferred, we may fitly congratulate. Some are always ready with soft words. But flattery is injurious to the receiver, whether it be to a people or a king; and also to the giver. I therefore must pause till I see how this force is incorporated with other essentials of national well-being; with administration and general government, with national authority and influence and power, with the discipline and effectiveness of the army, with a sufficient and justly apportioned revenue, with the maintenance of moral and religious life, with the safety of property, with peace and respect for law, with manners that adorn society and public life. These are indispensable elements of good; and apart from them liberty is neither beneficial nor able to endure. Liberty, in the case of an individual, is power to do what he chooses. Everything depends on what he chooses to do. But, in the case of multitudes acting together, the matter is infinitely more important. For their liberty means power. Moving masses

are not easily resisted. And thoughtful people will take care to observe what kind of use is made of this power; all the more so when the power is new and the persons unknown. For much depends on the temper and character of the persons or the crowds; much also on the situations wherein they are placed and the forces by which they are moved."

At the close of the book he asserts that freedom "without wisdom and virtue" is the very greatest of evils, and that what is required is the tempering, or effective and harmonious combination, of freedom and restraint. This is what forms a "free government." In his later book, the *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*, he asserts that the French liberty is "nothing but the rein given to vice and confusion." And he there recalls what long before he had said to the electors of Bristol regarding the British constitution. "The distinguishing part of our constitution is its liberty. To preserve that liberty inviolate is the peculiar duty and proper trust of a member of the House of Commons. But the liberty, the only liberty, I mean is a liberty connected with order; and that not only exists with order and virtue but cannot exist at all without them. It inheres in good and steady government as its substance and vital principle." And, once more, in para. 54-55 of the *Reflections*, he shows how through the principle of inheritance, liberty is tempered with gravity, made noble and majestic, and invested with honour and reverence.

The following are additional aspects taken from the *Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol*: "Civil freedom is not a thing that lies hid in the depth of abstruse science: it is a blessing and a benefit, not an abstract speculation. Unlike the propositions in Geometry, which admit no medium but must be true or false, social and civil freedom are variously mixed and modified, enjoyed in different degrees, and shaped into an infinite diversity of forms according to the temper and circumstances of every community. The extreme of liberty (which is its abstract perfection but its real fault) obtains nowhere, nor ought to obtain anywhere. Liberty must be limited in order to be possessed. It ought to be the constant aim of every wise public council to find 'out, by cautious experiments and rational cool endeavours, with how little, not how much, of restraint the community can subsist. For liberty is a good to be improved, not an evil to be lessened."—

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In such forms does Burke repeat and inculcate both the strictly moral and the practical aspects of this fundamental good. The ethical aspect of liberty is asserted with equal emphasis by Milton who was an enthusiast both for intellectual liberty and for the rights of peoples. But indeed it is the teaching of the wise and thoughtful of every age. And Burke may have learned it equally from lessons of personal experience and from the ample page of knowledge with which as a student of history he was profoundly familiar.

The first large chapter (Para. 19-55) deals with the English settlement of 1689 and with the conclusions that Price and others draw therefrom. The fundamental statement, that the ruling dynasty owe the crown to the choice of the people, is one that is arguable either way. Through what was deemed the necessity of the situation the reigning monarch was set aside and another—his nephew and son-in-law—was substituted in his stead. The problem both of principle and of practice was sufficiently felt at the time. The head of the English church resigned his see rather than take the oath of allegiance to a monarch who was not the nearest heir. And, while the majority of statesmen and people believed that there was an over-ruling necessity which dictated the change, others for a generation hoped for the return of the banished princes. But when George I. was firmly seated on the throne the new arrangements had passed into the third stage of trial; and the Revolution was an established fact. The principles of 1688 were now fully translated into practice; prescriptive authority was gathering round them; to the new generation they were as a natural birthright; and as the years passed it was in the nature of things that they should be interpreted more widely by posterity than they were by the original actors. Burke asserts that there was no change in the Constitution; and constitutionally he is right. But a change in persons may be as important as a change in principles. And the committing to writing of unwritten law may itself involve a new departure in the meaning and spirit and power of laws. The change in 1688, followed by resolutions that defined (and thereby extended) the duties and privileges of the Commons, wrought enormous results. There was a change in the spirit of

government, a change in the conceptions of public duty, a change in the character of history. The monarchs might still be self-assertive ; but in another fashion, and with the feeling that they were the representatives of their people. When the new conditions were in full play the old theory of the divine right of Kings, which all the Stuarts asserted and for which Charles I. died, was now little more than a hideous dream. It is therefore not to be supposed that Burke gives us the whole truth. He writes as a lawyer with a brief for the Conservative side. He demolishes the rash theories of his opponent. He shows us the accuracy, the importance, and the greatness of the truth which he defends. He emphasises the right of correction, as errors or corruptions arise. He mildly suggests a principle of improvement and a possibility of acquisition. But our modern ideas of evolutionary progress did not belong to the sphere of his thought. When he was forty years of age a demand arose for political advance on the basis of electoral reform. This he resisted for over twenty years before the date of the *Reflections*. Price represented one wing of the progressive party ; and the wing most offensive to Burke from its want of sympathy with the modes of chivalry and religion and magnificence that came down from medieval times. And it was doubly hateful from its appeal to a turbulent democracy. It was therefore with the skill of a parliamentary protagonist that he resolved to expose vague, inaccurate and dangerous assumptions, and to hold up the man and his theories to the scorn of the world.

He conveniently finds the new revolutionary pretensions gathered up in a sentence which asserts, (1) freedom of the choice of rulers, (2) right of the dismissal of Kings, and (3) competence to create a new type of government. These (Price asserted) were involved in the Revolution Settlement, and Burke, by reference to original documents, conclusively proves that not one of them was. Again in reference to the first of them (which, Price supposes, was put in practice) it is argued that the English King is a legal one, while the same compliment cannot be paid to the kings of other nations. Burke exposes the hollowness and insidiousness of this plausible pretence, and shows the possibilities that lurk within it (19-21). Price and his friends wish to popularise a theory which at some other date may be made use of. But, if directly challenged, they resort to subterfuges, and make statements which no one

cares to deny. The statement regarding ‘choice’ Burke replies to in para. 23-40, showing the hereditary character of the monarchy and the slight variations which the principle allowed. The most important paragraphs are 31, which draws a distinction between abstract power and moral competence, and 33 which refers to the mode of rectification when one of the parts has erred. The second point is argued in 41-48 ; and the exalted and irresponsible character of the English sovereignty is set forth. Cashiering can apply only to the case of necessity, and be carried out only through war. The third point ( 49-53 ) is disproved by the proofs of inheritance. All rights, franchises, liberties and privileges have descended from a distant past.

The details of the various arguments are sufficiently indicated in the text and notes ; and here we may add some additional points from Burke’s next volume, the *Appeal*. Burke there quotes from the various testimonies to Whig principles that were authoritatively laid down on the occasion of a historic trial in the reign of Queen Anne. One of the lawyers Mr. Lechmere, in the name and on the behalf of all the Commons asserted—

“ The nature of our Constitution is that of a limited monarchy ; wherein the supreme power is communicated and divided between Queen, Lords, and Commons, though the executive power and administration be wholly in the Crown. The terms of such a constitution do not only suppose but express an original contract between the crown and the people ; by which that supreme power was ( by mutual consent and not by accident ) limited, and lodged in more hands than one. And the uniform preservation of such a constitution for so many ages, without any fundamental change, demonstrates to your lordships the continuance of the same contract.”

These words express the fundamental principle and the general character of the British constitution. The phrase “supreme power” includes the legislative and all real sovereignty. Details of special rights and privileges are not included in the statement. But the principle is implied, and was explicitly stated by the same speaker, that the laws are binding alike on the sovereign lord and on the people. “ The laws are the “rule to both ; the common measure of the power of the crown “and of the obedience of the subject ; and if the executive part

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"endeavours the subversion and total destruction of the government the original contract is thereby broken, and the right of allegiance ceases ; that part of the government thus fundamentally injured hath a right to save or recover that constitution in which it had an original interest."

The Revolution took place because the laws were fundamentally broken by the Crown. Walpole asserted that resistance, outside the law, such as took place in 1688, could only be justified "when an utter subversion of the laws of the realm threatens the whole frame of our constitution, and no redress can otherwise be hoped for." Mr. Lechmere added : "it appears to your lordships and the world that *breaking the original contract between king and people* were the words made choice of by that House of Commons with the greatest deliberation and judgment and approved of by your lordships in that first and fundamental step (the Bill of Rights) towards the re-establishment of the government, which had received so great a shock from the evil counsels which had been given (by Jesuits) to that unfortunate prince."

The next point is to emphasise the *necessity* of action, and the necessity of the means adopted, a point which Burke restates in answer to Price's theory of choice. Mr. Lechmere emphasises "the necessity of that case" in distinction from cases of friction "where there is not the same necessity", and adds : "the right of the people to self-defence and preservation of their liberties by resistance as their last remedy is the result of a case of such necessity only, and by which the original contract between king and people is broken. This was the principle laid down and carried through all that was said with respect to allegiance ; and on which foundation, in the name and on behalf of all the commons of Great Britain, we assert and justify that resistance by which the late happy Revolution was brought about." General Stanhope similarly declared "the necessities of those times which brought about the Revolution ; that no other remedy was left to preserve our religion and liberties ; that resistance was necessary, and consequently just." Another eminent Whig, Sir Joseph Jekyl, laid emphasis on the point that the Commons did not and could not lay down the *limits and bounds* of the submission of the subject, and that the only aim and intention of the resistance of 1688 was

to rescue and secure the laws. "We have insisted (he added) "that in no case can resistance be lawful, but in case of extreme "necessity, and where the constitution cannot otherwise be "preserved; and such necessity ought to be plain and obvious "to the sense and judgment of the whole nation, and this was "the case at the Revolution." That the case was not one which could be dealt with by the laws was shown by the solicitor-general, Sir Robert Eyre, who pointed out that by the subversion and breach of compact the force of laws had ceased. There was, he said, "a total subversion of the constitution of government both in church and state, which is a case that the laws of England could never suppose, provide for, or have in view." "Necessity," Jekyl said, with the consent of the Tory lawyers, "creates an exception to the general rule of submission;" and he added, "the case of the Revolution was a case of necessity." The armed support of William is often referred to as "the necessary means."

Burke's principles of inheritance and transmission were also declared. Sir Robert Eyre asserted the supreme importance of maintaining the authority of the parliamentary settlement in a case "where the hereditary right to the crown is contested." Mr. Lechmere said that the ancient Constitution was "providentially saved at the late happy Revolution," and is now made firmer with the "most comfortable prospect of security to all prosperity." Jekyl argued that the *regal power* and the *rights of the people* had been recovered together. "It is hard to say in "which the people have the greatest interest; for the Commons "are sensible that there is not one power belonging to the "crown but they have an interest in it; and I doubt not but "they will always be as careful to support the rights of the "crown as their own privileges." On the question whether there was an innovation in 1689, as Price and others pretend, Jekyl speaks with no uncertain sound. "If the Doctor (Sacheverell) "instructed his counsel to insinuate that there was any innovation in the Constitution wrought by the Revolution it is an addition to his crime. The Revolution did not introduce any "innovation; it was a restoration of the ancient fundamental "constitution of the kingdom, and giving it its proper force and "energy."

Thus over the whole ground it may be abundantly shown that Burke wrote with fulness of knowledge. He felt for the British Constitution the love and admiration and reverence which belonged to the men who in 1689 readjusted matters and in the subsequent years watched over the edifice until the days of danger were past. To them the British Constitution, with its variety of parts, its regard for the highest and for the people at large, its blending of aristocracy and democracy under a controlling and uniting head, its diversity of functions and interests, its careful and delicate balance, its capacity of expansion and adaptation, its power to please all classes, secure all rights and promote all interests, appeared the greatest creation of instinctive wisdom in the political history of mankind. Therefore it is that it was regarded with sacred affection ; and that Burke in the closing paragraph of this section puts forth all his eloquence, invoking the eternal law of nature, and investing the object of his reverence with every attribute of honour and renown.

There are many subsidiary and supplementary points. The distinction between unwritten and written law reappears in the distinction between the Constitution and specific political enactments. It is this that allows adaptation to new needs. On the other hand it may allow reactionary or revolutionary licence ; against which the common sense of the people and the honour of statesmen are the natural safeguards. Thus Burke, distinguishing moral and practical competence from abstract or theoretic right, asserts, as the primary illustration thereof, that the lords are not competent to dissolve the House of Commons. It is remarkable that this moral but unwritten law remained unviolated from the date of the revolution for a century backwards and for 220 years forward. But this is what the lords have been emboldened to do in the year 1909 ; thereby inaugurating a new epoch of constitutional readjustment. This they were able to do by the refusal of supplies, the fundamental requirement of administration. But expedients of despair defeat their own ends, and strengthen the basis of constitutional action. The great development of the country has tended to change the metaphor from that of a delicate balance to a pyramidal structure. But the enhancement of the Commons has not lessened the dignity or the influence of a constitutional monarch. Nor can the lords be injured except by themselves, for there is now a

far more ample aristocracy than that of old. Two of the chief developments of the last two centuries are in the methods of *finance* and in the *cabinet* system. The latter is an enlargement of the central and fundamental power of the king ; by which all departments of ever-expanding administration are under the direct control of a united body which is the organ and right arm of the King. And to this body belong initiative in important legislation, and determining advice in every imperial interest. Questions of finance, with the annual voting of supplies for the civil and military services, occupy another sphere of equal constitutional importance : and it is mainly through these (which vitally affect the interests of trade and all business) that the predominance of the Commons is maintained. And the royal prerogative, which dissolves parliaments, creates peerages, makes peace or war, and appoints to all high offices, is, in the last resort, the power that solves problems and directs the entire machinery of the State.

Burke's discussion of the English Constitution ends with the two magnificent paragraphs in which he asserts that the idea of an "entailed inheritance," and the principle of continuity (with correction or improvement) therein implied, rests upon the constitution of nature and corresponds to the highest emotions of man. Institutions are thus made parallel with human life, as it may be observed in families or in nations. In the midst of change they remain constant, and "move on through the varied tenour of perpetual decay, fall, renovation and progression." Besides being beneficial or blissful they awaken sentiments of reverence, and impart a consciousness of an essential dignity in the affairs of state. And thus liberty becomes a noble freedom (54-55).

The next chapter deals with the new French constitution and its workings ; finding the explanation of the mismanagement in the *personnel* of the Estates (56-76). France might, like England, have proceeded on conservative lines, she might have reconstructed on the basis of the past. Above all she should have preserved the opposition of interests involved in the maintenance of separate estates kept in their proper spheres by a

strong monarchy. The eager reformer cannot brook delays. He thinks his nostrum perfectly remedial, and desires obstruction to be instantly overwhelmed. But Burke does not hesitate to say that opposition, or action with reaction, or the "reciprocal struggle of discordant powers," is the foundation and security of the harmony of things. Again he asserts the philosophic analogy, and declares that this is the law both of the political and of the natural world. By counteraction men are compelled to examine more seriously, and to see the other sides of truth, and to become moderate in their aims, and to arrange by compromise. And thus, though the result be theoretically imperfect, the good of all is secured. He then turns upon the French for their contempt of their past; and by an antithesis of what might have been and what is, of the prosperity forfeited and the ruin wrought at the expense of honour, he emphasises the fruits of rashness and incompetence. This contrast he arranges in two of his mighty climaxes: a potent monarchy, a disciplined army, a reformed and venerated clergy, a mitigated but spirited nobility . . . . on the one side; laws overturned, tribunals subverted, industry without vigour, commerce expiring, . . . . on the other side. And if words and thoughts can slay, the slaughter is here effectually accomplished. And all these results are traced first to the double representation, accompanied by the united voting, secondly to the ignoble composition of the Third Estate, and thirdly to the strength brought to this Third Estate from the inferior clergy who are their instruments and the apostate nobles who are ambitious to lead. The House of Commons, on the contrary, is "filled with everything illustrious in rank, in descent, in hereditary and acquired opulence, in cultivated talents, in military, civil, naval and politic distinction." France in the past had erred by excess of loyalty. Now the other extreme is reached, and the new levellers will reverse the law of nature and turn the constitution upside down.

In the next chapter (77-97) he passes, by an easy change of thought, from the more practical aspect to the more abstract principles involved; especially to the radical theories of equal Representation and of the Rights of Man. Here Burke comes

into direct conflict with the principles of the Revolution; and here we see the opposition between Burke's conservatism and modern reforming tendencies. Theoretically he, of course, admits that there are rights of men which it is the duty of government to secure; and that only virtue and wisdom have an inherent right to rule. But he denies that Representation is among these rights; and he exaggerates the part that should be assigned to property. Burke looks at the matter practically; the question to him being how to get the best members of parliament and the most competent ministers. He has no belief in numbers or in the mob; and he denies their supposed right to rule. Property and ability (or wealth and the professions) are the things to be represented. But for its own security, which is fundamental to social life, property must be largely represented, and specially in its largest masses of huge landed estates. For the great proprietors alone can be entirely trusted with its defence. Again its hereditary character must be maintained, for this perpetuation is a source of important social virtues. · Regard for posterity helps to "graft benevolence even upon avarice."

In this there is much that is true and much, also, that is unsatisfactory. Burke belongs to a transitional generation. To-day the growth of wealth and arts and a thousand forms of refinement and knowledge has made the lords, or landed proprietors, only a small section of the real aristocracy. Burke regarded each member of Parliament as a member for England, and considered it immaterial who the electors were. To-day the multiplicity of interests, varying from place to place, makes a truly representative system necessary. For only thus can unfamiliar but essential requirements find expression. Again the admission of greater numbers to the franchise is a natural result of the advance, amongst the masses, of knowledge and civilisation; and it is now believed that by the broadening of the basis, and the interesting of greater numbers in the constitution, greater stability is secured. But with all his fore-sight and far-sight Burke failed to see these necessities or advantages of the future.

But if, according to Burke, neither representation in parliament, nor a share in government, nor easy access to office, is to be admitted as a right, what are the rights of men? Primarily, like Plato in his *Republic*, he asserts that men have a

right to the supply of their *wants*; to supply these society exists and government has been contrived (90-92). Or, as he otherwise puts it, the advantages of society are their rights. Society is an "institution of beneficence," and law is "beneficence acting by a rule." These benefits include justice, the fruits and freedom of industry, the acquisitions of parents, the rearing of children, education, religion. Men have a right not only to their own achievements, but also to a share of what society accomplishes. But here he distinguishes. There can be no real equality; and the rights of men are not to equal shares, but to shares proportioned to their individual importance in the state. So far as to the advantages or gains of society; but as to a share in the directorate, or government of the country, Burke repeats that there is no such fundamental right. The form of government, or the choice and organisation of the body of directors, is a question of convention or agreement, a matter determined historically by those who through compact constitute the Constitution, which again rests upon the deeper primeval contract. This convention, or constitutional arrangement, will naturally vary in different countries or times. It is subject to revision at any time, though changes should be infrequent. It is simply the settlement which has been deemed politically expedient and has been acquiesced in by the nation (92-93).

The fundamental doctrine is the original contract. This was the accepted theory of two centuries; and although it arose when ideas of antiquity and of development were far vaguer than they are now it must have expressed some important truth clear and intelligible to those who held it as an article of faith. It implies that every tribal union has been an agreement amongst the members thereof, begun and continued under some recognised and accepted mode of management. In this way have been formed cities and nations; for the terms city, people, nation, kingdom, as well as those others, community, polity, caste, society, imply a fundamental organisation, and are meaningless otherwise. Government on this view did not arise out of ambition and conquest, but from the grouping of men in response to mutual need. The supply of wants, the settlement of disputes, protection from enemies, and means of acquisition—these are amongst the fundamental grounds on account of which social or political unions began (91-92).

But Burke also presents the case from another point of view. These arrangements rest upon a divine idea and an eternal plan. The needs of men or nations belong to human nature as originally constituted; and the same beneficent Creator, who implanted in man his affections and determined the conditions of his existence, designed and decreed those facts of combination and union and orderly action by which life, in its variety of power, is called forth and continued. Therefore it is that he says further on (in the commencement of the Second Part) that the union of a people is a partnership not in mere material things, but in all science and all art, every virtue and all perfection. And again, "each contract of each particular state is but a clause in the great primeval contract of eternal society, linking the lower with the higher natures, connecting the visible and invisible world." And, stronger still, this enduring contract has its sanction in an oath of the universal Governor by which the unity of creation is preserved and all natures, moral or physical find their predestined place. Such being the greatness of the case and such the vast interests involved, it is not to be thought of that old constitutions should be suddenly transformed or that new constitutions should be hatched from the brains of inexperienced innovators. A constitution is an organic growth, enlarged, adapted and strengthened in the course of time by the free play and natural interaction of the multitudinous and complicated forces that compose a people's life. It is to be regarded with veneration, and reformed with the caution of reverence.

That there is a science of Politics, Burke admits. But it is a difficult science because of its moral and practical character. In affairs dependent on moral conditions and operations the effects of actions cannot at once be known. There are immediate effects, but the ultimate results may be different and more important. And in all practical matters long observation and ripe experience are required. Therefore the Science is not to be determined by theoretical argument or mere scholastic discussion. It is not an *a priori* science in which solutions can be evolved out of the human mind. Its conclusions must rest on careful Induction. Simple contrivances are not adapted to complicate societies. Theoretical rights are as rays which, in the struggling masses of mankind, are at once refracted from the straight course. The so called rights of liberty or equality are imaginary

extremes ; aiming at an ideal perfection which in practice would be found ruinous. The practical rights, or advantages, are obtained through compromise and a careful balancing of interests. "Political reason is a computing principle, adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing true moral denominations." There is no right whatever apart from virtue and prudence. And the identification of right with power, or moral competence with unchecked will, is sophistry and crime (94-97).

The next chapter (98-134) is mainly occupied with the moral aspects of things ; and in the paragraphs on the older Chivalry and the new cold selfishness we have the climax of the first part of the volume. All through this first part Price serves as a point of departure or of reference in the unfolding of the stages of Burke's argument. In the preceding chapter Prices's references to representation, and his criticism of the English electoral arrangements, afforded material both for argumentative correction and for the ridicule of invective. In this chapter Price's delight in the French revolution, and especially in the humiliation of the king, serves a similar purpose. The first two paragraphs condemn the habit of heartlessly talking of revolution. The effect of such talk is to relax and debase the moral nature. It does not strengthen the spirit of liberty, but on the contrary deprives it of its vigour. And experience shows that high-bred republicans fail in persistence, and lapse into servile conformity. Some others that persist in a revolutionary attitude prove themselves to be devoid of principle in ordinary affairs. Having in view one end, for which only they care, they show themselves untrustworthy as associates in any thing else, and they pass readily from one extreme to another (99). A great evil of revolutionary policy is that, in view of contemplated acts of overthrow, men harden their hearts ; thereby imbibing the injurious influence even when the events do not occur (100). This is fully illustrated in Price's Sermon. The gross insult to the King and Queen fills him with a sort of rapturous joy ; which Burke exposes with mingled ridicule and indignation. The horrible incident, being illustrative of the new manners, is handled through several pages preparatory to the lament over the degeneracy of the times. Burke will not

attribute it to France as a whole, nor even to the National Assembly, which sits now in Paris, intimidated by the ruffian mob. Para. 107 gives an eloquent description of the alarming state of affairs in Paris, as they are conceived by Burke. The city is to the Assembly as a foreign republic. It has organised an unconstitutional municipal government ; and its illegal army dominates the situation. Other bands are ready to riot in murder ; and amongst their leaders are men equal to the worst in history. Behind the public exhibitions are the coffee-houses, where policy is decreed. In these clubs, or seminaries of sedition, Burke finds the fountain and source of evils. There cruelty is cultivated and crime is planned. ‘ Tenderness to individuals’ is reckoned ‘ treason to the state ’ ; and the virtuous are forced into ruin. Nor has the Assembly the appearance of an august deliberative body. The whole thing is a burlesque ; and the gravest matters are dealt with in a semi-sportive style (108-9).

The New Year Address to the King, in which he was asked to forget the humiliation on account of the national benefit, again recalls Burke to the treatment of the monarchy. Such an address, however good-humoured, is only a filling of the cup of sorrow. And having said so Burke proceeds to recall what happened on the 6th October, and again to denounce the man who could rejoice over it in the language of sacred Scripture. But Burke sees therein a hatred of the church establishment, and imagines that there was a conspiracy, gratifying to Price, against the bishops as well as against the Crown. Burke is pleased that the outrage was borne with dignity by King and Queen (110-118).

The passage speaking of the decay of noble sentiment is introduced by the paragraph (119) in which Burke recalls his first vision of Marie Antoinette ; and on the treatment of her he bases his contrast of the magnanimous past and the ignoble present. This paragraph has ever since been regarded as a masterpiece, and as one of the most beautiful in the whole range of English literature. In a few words it presents to us a vision of human loveliness, and of the heroic and spontaneous devotion under whose protection such grace or charm was able to flourish. And in contrast therewith we are made to feel the cold calculating selfishness of a degenerate and loveless utilitarianism. This paragraph stands, and was probably designed,

as an introduction to the five short paragraphs that follow in which the historic bearings of the change are strikingly expressed.

In the first place the origin of the higher code of sentiment and honour is assigned to the ancient chivalry. Chivalry is the system of gallantry or knighthood that arose in the twelfth century, and was at its height in the thirteenth, and continued to linger, modified by advancing ideas of knowledge industry and regard for the masses of men, down to the seventeenth century or even later. Knighthood is valour; but it seeks the accompaniment of the graces, and it cultivates devotion. The themes of chivalrous sentiment are war and love and religion. The most remarkable feature is the extent to which was carried reverence for woman. Many causes may be assigned for this new development, though the fundamental one is in the fact that the Middle Ages were past and that in every direction a new activity and advance of the human mind was shown. The Crusades were one determining cause of the forms which the chivalrous cult assumed. They called forth the emotions of religion and the arts of military skill. But in times when the heads of families were often absent for months or years responsibilities of action were thrown on wives, and the unprotected were hedged with sentiments of honour and respect. Chivalry had its external splendour in regal palaces and the houses of the great nobility, in the magnificence of the affairs of state, in tournaments where the highest skill was exhibited before the fairest onlookers, and in Courts of Love where queens of beauty were honoured. The instinct of magnificence and art found long-enduring expression in the great Cathedrals, monuments of architectural genius, that arose all over Europe. Similarly literature sprang again into a brilliant existence. In the earlier days the songs of trouveres and troubadours were heard all over France. Their themes were war and love. Romances of chivalry began, and various forms of lay or ballad or song, in England and France and Spain. But the highest achievements were attained in Italy. In the thirteenth century appeared the great Dante, in whom the past centuries were consummated, his own century embodied, the coming centuries inaugurated. The theme of his Epic, the Divine Comedy, and of his Sonnets, the New Life, was religion and sacred

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love; and he was followed by his equal in influence and scholarship, Petrarch, the model of the finer sonneteers. Both of these men were inspired by an object of adoration, the beatified Beatrice in the one case and the divine Laura in the other, persons whom they had just seen as Burke saw Marie Antoinette, but who in youth had passed from this world. This manner of rendering homage in lyric verse remained a fashion, and almost an obligation, down to the seventeenth century. Ideas of chivalry are essential elements of all the greater poetry of these centuries. The last full expression of them is in Spenser's *Fairy Queen*; though the spirit of them lingers in Milton and Dryden; and something of a revival was attempted in the romances of Scott and in Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*.

Chivalry, Burke says, gave rise to a body of sentiment and opinion which moulded the higher civilisation of Europe. It produced a "noble equality," far different from the assertive claims of upstarts, which while not disturbing the gradations of rank united widely different classes in the instincts and aims of a common humanity. It "mitigated kings into companions and raised private men to be fellows with kings." It gathered round the nobility large bodies of associates: and, amongst these, men of literary or artistic talent found scope for their special gifts. It also softened the harshness of authority through the power of established social ideas and through the influences of refinement and elegance (120).

In contrast with all this excellence, to which Burke imparts an enchantment and a glory partly due to his own imagination, he sees in the future an unamiable society and a dark outlook. The new so-called enlightenment repudiates religion, and, therewith, all the higher emotions of reverence or devotion. Hereafter queens are to have no halo, and priests no indelible or inviolable character. All sentiments of romance, and therewith all refinements of taste, are to disappear. The world is to be reduced to principles of equality, simplicity and theoretic nakedness. Burke indicates something of the loss which he supposes will befall the State. The monarchical principle allowed the growth of affection, through the regard cherished for the person, in whom, as sovereign, the State seemed embodied. Sentiments of love, veneration or attachment were

developed, and served a beneficial end by their effect in mitigating or supplementing law. All this is to be dissolved ; and authority must henceforth sustain itself by the physical forces at its command. They that no longer cherish fealty will now have to submit through fear. And kings who feel their thrones insecure will revert to the maxims and methods of tyrants. In the new age of rationalism and selfishness the conditions of social and public life will be altered ; and the vessel of the State will move forward over troubled waters and under cloudy skies in a course and to a shore that cannot now be discerned (121-125).

Nor will the change be confined to the spheres of public life. It will be felt in literature and all the intellectual arts. (126-128). The two elements of national life that in these past centuries rose above the general level and imparted distinction to their times were those embodied in the nobility and the priesthood. In the first was seen the evolution of the idea of gentleness, or of superiority in birth and breeding ; in the second the concrete expression of the idea of religion. These two by mutual help, created the learning out of which the arts and sciences have arisen. The nobles patronised the scholars, and the scholars enlightened the nobles ; and through this union and interaction the fruits of civilisation were multiplied. And, yet more, the new sources of wealth in commerce and manufacture sprang into activity under the same shelter and protection. Everything valuable in our present civilisation has in its progress been associated with these older principles. Even if commerce should decay these principles would still ennoble a people. But if both commerce and manners come to wreck together the ultimate result will be a stupid and hopeless barbarism.

From this point, para. 129, Burke descends towards the close of his high argument. He points out (partly to justify his own interference) the close connection of all Europe with France. He dreads, as a consequence, a general revolution in sentiments, manners and moral ideas. He says also that it is in accordance with nature, that men endowed with sensibility should be affected by events so terrible and so tragic. We "are alarmed into reflection." The maxims of Price, and his unnatural exultation, are such as even in imitation would not be tolerated on the stage, where human emotions have free play ; because men

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instinctively feel that such principles may lead to every accumulation of crime (131). Finally he refers to the French Court, and to the criticisms of the king and queen. Louis XVI. is not to blame for the system into which he was born. During his whole reign he made successive concessions. If he were a guilty tyrant he should be tried with dignity. He has been treated as a criminal, and then put into an office for which no criminal is fitted. There is no consistency in the methods of his calumniators. We in England refuse to believe the slanderers of the king and queen of France. We are ready to treat them as they deserve (132-135).

The paragraphs that follow (136-148) constitute the concluding section of Part First, which might have been published as a complete treatise ; while at the same time they prepare for the chief argument of Part Second *viz.*, the defence of Church establishments and of the clergy of France. In these paragraphs he points out that the English are misconceived by foreigners, who attach undue importance to the utterances of noisy and unrepresentative men. The figure of the grasshoppers and the great cattle is a memorable expression of this perennial fact. The English are not ungenerous, and they have not lost religion, and they have not abandoned the ancient and true principles of government, and they have not emptied themselves of true human affection. They are naturally conservative, and they seek elements of truth in ancient wisdom, and they know the practical value of prejudice. The French revolutionists are quite the opposite. They have no respect for the past or for permanence. They are guided by the expediency of the moment. And while they teach the responsibility of kings or magistrates they have little consciousness of the responsibility of peoples (139).

The statement that France is following England Burke warmly repudiates ; and with equal emphasis he asserts that, notwithstanding the activity of intriguing cabals or the violence of the dogmatists of irreligion, England will not follow France. The credit of the doings in France is claimed by a party of professing philosophers who have set aside the principles and obligations of religion. We have had rationalists in England, who are now forgotten. They were isolated men and not a party

of schemers ; and they did nothing to form our Constitution. We believe that religion is the basis of society ; and we should prefer superstition to atheism. We would not allow enemies of the Church to take part in its reform. We are Protestants by conviction, but we persecute no form of Christianity. Man is by nature religious. Atheism is contrary both to reason and to instinct. If in a fit of madness true religion be set aside a void will be felt which will soon be filled by false religion. But to prevent such aberrations we have set up, and are determined to maintain, an established and endowed national Church. The Church is one of our four great establishments ; and it is the first and greatest of them all (141-147).

For his Second Part Burke had evidently designed an exposition of public life under the two ancient designations of Church and State. These may be looked upon as two divisions of national life, or as both describing different sides and aspects of the same thing. The State again may be subdivided into three parts ; referred to in the text as established monarchy, aristocracy and democracy, corresponding to the divisions of the sovereign power (according to the English Constitution) between king, lords and commons. But this plan of a fourfold exposition is not adhered to. Only one of the themes—the Church establishment—is adequately handled. A clear and definite exposition of the English Constitution, of the three parts and their duties combined and separate, of their inter-relationships and interdependence, and of the relation of each to other public functions or to the national life as a whole, would have been a work of immense value. Burke may have felt that a time of transition had arrived, and that the ideas of his early manhood were giving place to new conceptions according to which the old balance would no longer be maintained. Or he may have been carried away in a whirlwind of passion from the moods of philosophic exposition to a resolute endeavour to counteract the new forces of disintegration. In any case, after a masterly exposition of the theory of Church establishment and endowment, he turns to France and only slightly touches again on Britain. The Confiscation masters him ; and thereafter instead of king, lords and commons he gives us chapters on the monarchy, noblesse and clergy of France ; the last leading again to the ever-recurring theme of the Confiscation.

Para. 149-169 are occupied with the general defence of the principle of an establishment, gradually passing to the subject of Endowment as preparatory to the still longer section (170-207) dealing with the Disendowment in France.

The first paragraph bases the theory of Church Establishments on very high ground. It is the consecration of the State. It is not a new method, but accords with ancient practice and universal instinct. It is a consecration in order to protect the State from violence, and to impart to public officers the highest sense of duty. Under this consecration the State becomes a sacred institution, and its ministers may be compared to the priesthood of a sanctuary. By the worship and the instruction pertaining to the Church the thoughts of public men are lifted above temporary aspects and worldly gains. The solemnity of public duty and the prospects of immortality are placed before them; and thus they are taught to look away from the present both to rewards in another world and to enduring fame and influence here (149).

Secondly these principles of religion should be impressed on all in high position. Man is a wonderful structure, and he may be so moulded and ennobled as to occupy a high place in creation. It depends largely on himself. And therefore whatever tends to unite him, in the regions of instinct or affection and of understanding or reason, with the Divine should be carefully cultivated. Moral and religious institutions of every kind, as well as civil and secular institutions, are needed. And they are needed most of all for their influence over rulers and officers of State. For it is in the case of these, on account of the difficulties and trials of their position, that we should endeavour to secure the utmost possible perfection of man (150).

Thirdly the Establishment is necessary in order to impress with a sense of public duty those citizens to whom is assigned a share in government, either national or municipal. On them, far more than on the private citizens whose concerns are personal or domestic, must be impressed the sacredness of the trust committed to them. For membership in a governing body, or even the mere exercise of a franchise, is a trust for which the person in whom it is reposed is responsible to the author of society, that is, to God (151).

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When we compare governments vested in respect of supreme power in an individual with governments vested in large numbers we see that the inculcation of moral and religious lessons is even more necessary in the latter case than in the former. An absolute prince is in himself helpless. He must work through others. He finds impediments which he cannot always overcome. He may encounter opposition and be overthrown either by rebellion of the people, or (as in France) by the treachery of the army, or even by his trusted body-guard. Therefore he will rarely be without a feeling of responsibility. But, on the other hand, sovereign assemblies or sovereign communities are not similarly limited and held in check. They are largely their own instruments ; little of impediment lies between them and their object, and the sense of responsibility is too divided to be operative. Hence the shamelessness of democracies. There is no earthly power that can punish a misgoverning people. Therefore it is all the more important that they should be emphatically taught that their will is not the standard of right and wrong. Arbitrary power exercised by a people is inverted tyranny. Therefore to exact from public servants unqualified submission to their will or humour is wrong. It tends to destroy the moral character, the judgment and the dignity of their agents, while at the same time it makes them [the prey of plausible and cunning leaders (152).

Another effect of religious teaching—when it has taught a people to renounce selfish desire and to realise that they possess in the highest possible form a divinely delegated power according to whose true exercise will is in perfect harmony with reason—is to make people very careful in the choice of officers. They will appoint only those in whom they find a predominance of active wisdom and virtue (153).

When they fully know that to God no evil can be acceptable then they will be able to exorcise from all their officers the spirit of haughtiness and despotism (154).

A fundamental principle, inculcated in the consecration, is that men are not to act as if a single generation were entirely free to carry out its own will. The fabric of society is a growth of ages, and sudden change may involve ruin. The Constitution is an inheritance, which we have to transmit. They that change according to fancy or fashion destroy the continuity and unity and achievements of national life (155).

On the theory of facile change the collected wisdom of the world would soon be worthless. The science of jurisprudence would become obsolete. Self-sufficiency would take its place. Nothing stable would remain as a guide or object of education. Habits would be formed without principles. The best teacher would be unable to fit his pupil for the world. With a changing public code no tender sense of honour could be created. All the treasures of art and science, of literature or manufacture, would be lost (156).

It is to prevent such evils that the State is made a sacred authority, to be regarded with filial and pious veneration. They that wantonly destroy an existing constitution, in order to substitute a new one, are like the children that would cut a parent in pieces in order to renew, by magic, his youth (157).

It is true that Society is a contract. But it is not a contract of the present, for a commercial or business end. Temporary contracts and partnerships are at any time dissolved. But this is a contract for other ends than pecuniary transactions. It includes all creations of mind, every virtue and every perfection. And it is a contract into which we are born; in which we constitute a partnership with the past and with the future. Even the contract which includes a whole national history is but a clause in the great contract which includes all times and nations; and which, even in that vast unity, embraces only a part of the Divine purpose. For the unity of creation includes beings other than man; all of whom are ultimately related by the unalterable decree of God.

The law of Society is therefore prior to our existence, and neither individuals nor the nation can disregard it, or exalt their will against it. A state of temporary chaos, such as is implied in a revolution, is pardonable only when overwhelming necessity demands it, necessity of a kind that supersedes all other considerations. Such necessities are not matters of choice but belong to the nature of things. But if men seek such a condition and call it necessity then nature is outraged, and all the evils of anarchy are the result (158).

Such are the sentiments entertained by thoughtful men, and accepted by millions more, in England. In their different ways they believe that social order is well-pleasing to the universal Ruler. They believe that to Him all

thing should be referred ; and accordingly, while as private citizens they offer individual or congregational worship, they hold also that it is the duty of the State in its collective capacity to render united national homage. Without this national homage man, in his civil character, cannot arrive at, or even approach, true perfection. The State is a divinely appointed means of man's perfection ; and it is consequently in immediate connection with Him who appointed it. His will is above all law, and is the source of all law. And our national homage is an acknowledgment thereof. They who believe so cannot reasonably object to magnificence in worship and to exalted offices in the State, provided the splendour is organised with modesty and sobriety. Money so spent is better used than in luxury. It speaks to all of consolation and hope ; and it raises the thoughts of the poor to the contemplation of another state in which virtue finds its reward (159).

The above opinions are Burke's both by acceptance and by independent meditation. They are the opinions of the majority, who even think that to be without an establishment is unlawful. And they constitute a principle pervading all our public life (160-162). Education, for example, is largely in the hands of ecclesiastics ; and these ecclesiastics become companions of our gentry, whereby both are benefited. So it was before the Reformation ; and so it is still, with the improvements that followed from that movement. And with this system of education we have borne our share in the advancement of the sciences and arts (163-164).

With establishment we combine Endowment. We do not believe in the sufficiency of the Voluntary principle. Nor do we approve of direct payment by the State. We wish the stipends of the clergy to be secure, and the clergy themselves to be independent. For these reasons we have placed the property of the Church in the same security as all private property (165-166).

English statesmen would not profess a religion and act as if they disbelieved it. The theory that religion is a thing for the multitude is not ours. We do indeed provide first for the multitude, in accordance with the original example, but we provide also for the rich whose moral blemishes and whose spiritual ignorance may be as great as are to be found amongst the

humblest (167). The rich too are unhappy, and need the consolations of religion, and something to make life more desirable for them (168). In order that religious teachers should be able to exercise influence over the proud they must be men of equal position and authority. Therefore there are high offices in the Church ; and bishops sit in Parliament, and take precedence of nobles, and have vast revenues which they largely spend in charity, though in this also we allow the discipline of freedom (169).

The next long section (170-207) is entirely occupied with the Confiscation ; the injustice and iniquity thereof, the causes or explanations, the false political economy, historic comparisons and secret motives. Property, Burke says, is an inviolable possession ; and if the distribution in the Church is unsatisfactory it can be modified and directed anew. Those who attack Church revenues are often actuated by envy ; but England will not be guilty of sacrilege or proscription (170-172). The outrages in France only put us on our guard. We will not indeed plunder one honest citizen, much less, venerable men of high and sacred office (173-174). To your victims you give pensions from impious hands, thereby aggravating the evil (175). It is true that you call it a judgment at law, ignoring prescription and denying to the clergy independent personal rights. You call them fictitious persons. Such are the arguments of tyrants (176-177). Again you put forth, as a pretext, regard for national faith ; and to fulfil a lesser obligation to creditors you plunder private citizens. Curiously you reckon these financial obligations valid, and yet you repudiate other more binding acts of the same former government. You repudiate pensions granted for honourable service, and therefore prior to the money-lender's claim. And you show the same laxity of faith in respect to international treaties. Why do you put the case of the creditor before these two forms of public obligation ? Burke can find no rational explanation, but he thinks he can show how this has come to pass (178-181).

In France in the eighteenth century two important new classes arose. First the monied interest ; which was jealous of

the nobles who, though poorer, were of higher social status. These men were ready to overthrow the Church because thereby the nobility was injured. They had an adventurous and innovating spirit (182-184). Again the men of letters, including large numbers employed in journalistic and other inferior work, now formed a united body, not only irreligious but fanatical and persecuting in their irreligion. These men used every artifice for the diffusion of their opinions. And they were ready not only to corrupt the populace but to intrigue with a foreign sovereign. They cultivated the monied interest and succeeded in forming an alliance with the men of wealth. They helped to make this rich class more respected ; and they acted as a sort of link uniting them with the masses of the poor. Thus the envy felt towards wealth was directed away from the stock-jobbers to the church and the nobility or the crown (185-189)

On the supposition that sufficient revenue could not be obtained Burke proceeds to argue that the clergy were in no sense responsible ; and that it would have been more reasonable to plunder those noblemen who had been concerned in the national expenditure. The confiscators in ancient Rome, and in modern times Henry VIII, gave plausible reasons for plunder. The French give no reason except their new theories of philosophy and of rights. In former times Shame remained; now it seems lost (190-195).

Burke next refers to Necker's financial statement (198) which showed only a small deficit ; and to the readiness of nobles and clergy to surrender all privileges (200). He shows that these classes actually paid high taxes (202), and that now the Church offered an extravagant contribution. This offer was refused because confiscation was intended (203). The confiscation went on although it defeated its own purpose through the depreciation of the value of land which it produced. It created new problems and controversies, and necessitated the paper currency on which all has subsequently depended. The compulsory character of this currency makes all men interested in the Church plunder. The dismissed judges of the parlements are also to be compensated in the same currency founded on robbery. And now finally it appears that the lands are not to be fairly sold. An arrangement is made by which purchasers are to pay at the beginning only a part. The design

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is to obtain a new body of land-owners who will feel that their fortunes are dependent on the continuance of the new political system of the Revolution (204-207).

The next section (208-222) is on Monarchy ; almost exclusively on the French monarchy. The first paragraph calls attention to the sophistick device of arguing as if the choice lay between democracy and despotism. Burke commends a "mixed and tempered government," a "monarchy directed by laws, " controlled and balanced by the great hereditary wealth and "hereditary dignity of a nation ; and both again controlled by "a judicious check from the reason and feeling of the people "at large acting by a suitable and permanent organ." These words are a description of the British Constitution as it is, or as Burke desires it to act. He recognises the monarch, or the kingly power, as the central point and primary force ; and then regards this principle as reinforced, and as hedged and directed, by the two great Houses representing the aristocracy and democracy of the country (208). It should be added that in all executive work, and in the initiation of legislation , the king is advised by ministers who are his active servants and who are responsible in all things to Parliament. This is the system which Burke considers suited to the modern nations. He does not judge any system on abstract principles. Forms depend on circumstances. But the mere democracy which they now have in France, though it may soon become an oligarchy, is open to many criticisms. Aristotle is quoted to the effect that democracies are allied to despotisms. In both there is an oppression of the minority, and especially of the best classes; in both selfish men, posing as demagogues or winning favour as flatterers obtain power. Under a democracy the persecuted are utterly miserable (209). But even if a democracy were tolerable, a monarchy has this advantage over it that it can more easily be modified and adapted to the needs of the time (210).

Burke finds that the French monarchy, though too nearly absolute in the past, could have been modified in 1789 with the consent of the whole of France. In the instructions to the deputies there was no talk of overthrow. But the reformers have

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been beaten by destroyers (211-213). In order to judge this past monarchy, which undoubtedly was weakened by inherited abuses, Burke examines the two tests of population and wealth, and concludes that under it France made great progress (214-218). He then gives us his magnificent picture of the fair face of France, and of the splendour of her creations of mind (219). He adds that the reign of Louis XVI. was characterised by continuous endeavours towards improvement, and that the errors of his Government were due to want of judgment rather than to defect in diligence (220). It is greatly to be doubted whether the new system will be able to give so good an account of itself in respect of the prosperity of the country. At present appearances are of an opposite kind (221-222).

The section on the Monarchy contains the fine description of the civilisation of France, and the next section (223-231), on the NOBILITY, concludes with a paragraph in which nobility is described as the "graceful ornament to the civil order, the Corinthian capital of polished society," and as the admiration of all good men. Burke finds in the French nobility nothing of the severe oppressiveness that he has found in the histories of some other countries. And on the election of the Estates the nobles instructed their deputies to surrender privileges and support reform (223-224). He recalls that Henry IV., whom it is the fashion to praise, spoke in high eulogy of the many excellences of his nobles. Burke thinks that since then there has been no marked degeneracy. His own observation has convinced him that the noblesse of France were men of a superior type (225-227).

Evils pertaining to the system of feudal tenure still lingering did exist; but the men themselves were not responsible for these, nor had they any part in acts of oppression connected with the raising of the revenue (228). Personal faults no doubt existed, especially in the acceptance of a licentious philosophy. And the social separation, though not greater than in most countries, was perhaps the main cause of their misfortunes. It was an error, but such as would have been corrected by the growth of more liberal opinions (229-230). In hatred of nobility Burke sees the expression of a sour and base spirit (231).

The next and much longer section (232-264) refers to the French CLERGY ; for Burke's thoughts are now concentrated on France where the clergy formed a separate estate, and the spoliation of the clergy is the inspiration of nearly the whole book. Here also there was room for reform ; but Burke's thoughts are directed to the study of history, for he finds that the excuse for confiscation is the wrong-doing in a distant past (233). To punish men for the acts of their predecessors in office is a new mode of injustice. The analogy might be extended, and nations might thus be punished for the deeds of past centuries. "Corporate bodies," Burke says "are immortal for the good of the members but not for their punishment." This leads him to speak of the moral lessons of history. The paragraph (235) is one of the most striking in the book. History (as recorded) consists mainly of the miseries caused by evil affections or passions. But while these vices are the causes of wars and convulsions something good (such as religion, laws, liberties, rights) is put forth as the pretext. Shall we uproot the principles to which these false pretexts apply? No, for that would be to uproot the most valuable elements in the mind of man. Similarly the ordinary actors in great disturbances are such as kings, priests, captains, parliament. Would the evil be removed if we abolish the corresponding offices and had no more magistrates, or clergymen or councils ? Certainly not, for in some new form such offices would have to be re-created. There must be power, and some persons must possess it ; though the titles or names of the possessors may differ in different times and countries. Such being the case a wise policy will seek to remedy the vices which are the real causes of troubles, and not the names or designations of the officers in whom these vices are actively manifested, nor the forms or temporary objects of desire for which apparently men contend. Pretences change, modes of trouble change, designations of actors change, but the vices remain. And if we give our attention to the fashion or the mode, we shall find that the same vice has passed into new activity in some new fashion. And in its new form it shows a pristine vigour. It is as a spirit that transmigrates into a new body. And in its new shape it is active, while you are concerning yourself with the former lifeless body. You are occupied with unrealities or imaginations, while live enemies are plundering your house. Such is the result of finding in history the outward shell and not

the inner spirit. While you think you are waging war with evils you may be encouraging the same evils under other forms. While you are condemning intolerance you are practising an equal intolerance. (235).

For example your citizens carried out the massacre of St. Bartholomew. Parisians to-day abhor that crime, because the fashion of their guilt has changed. But they have still the same murderous passions, though they are now directed against the priesthood. But the impartial and philosophic historian of the future will place the atheistic murderers of to-day and the priest-obeying murderers of the sixteenth century on the same level. It is to be hoped that in the coming century a race will arise that will abhor the methods of both of you, and not make war either on religion or on philosophy although now both of these causes and blessings have been grossly abused (236-237).

I admit that your clergy are not perfect, and that the professional faults of bigotry or intolerance are to be found amongst them. But I do not find the great faults that their predecessors of two centuries ago were accused of. I do not find interference with the civil power, or oppression of the laity, or endeavours to increase their property, or extortion or envy or violence or other abuse of power. In all these respects they were milder and better than their predecessors (238-241).

Burke, when in France, made inquiries regarding the clergy and obtained favourable reports. He met several of those in high office and judged them to be of a superior type. Some were men of great learning and of venerable character. They are, of course, not all equally excellent. But the new arrangements degrade alike the best and the worst. And the mode of popular election now introduced, will allow canvassers and intriguers to get the best appointments. The real motive of all this is the overthrow of Christianity, which is to be replaced by a purely secular system called Civic Education (242-245).

I trust neither of the principles of plunder and popular election will come into England. You think that we shall not object to persecution in France, because the French church is Catholic. There may be a few who feel so, and who would welcome the overthrow of religion rather than the success of a system different from their own. Burnet tells us that in France a century ago there were many of that way of thinking.

Something of the same kind exists in England, but it is not general. The founders of our system were men of deep conviction, who were ready to die for Protestantism, but who would have abhorred the plunderers of Catholicism. You boast of toleration, which is an easy thing when you accept no system. We tolerate not from indifference but out of regard to justice. And we will have nothing to do with you so long as the guilt of sacrilege remains (246-249). Again you think we will not object to the plunder of monasteries because we have not maintained any such institutions in England. We object to the principle of injustice, to the setting aside of natural rights acquired by prescription, to the commencement of the policy of plunder. We do not admit the right of any legislative authority to imperil the principle of property and to set aside the law of nations (250).

Another feature of your new policy is its epidemical and proselytising character. Tokens of fraternity pass between your revolutionists and men in England. It is not for church property that we fear, but for property of every kind. You say we need not be alarmed, as this is a measure of national policy for the removal of an evil; but the standing policy of nations is justice. And when men are encouraged to go into an honourable profession it is not for the legislature to degrade that profession (251-254).

In all such cases we are to examine the institution not as a thing in process of introduction, but as something long established and rooted in the national life. Such a thing cannot be uprooted without general injury. The true policy is neither unreformed continuance nor abolition, but maintenance in an improved condition. The monastic institutions contained materials and a power capable of adaptation to purposes of national policy and general benevolence. Wise statesmen might have used these materials for good ends. You have dissipated them, acting like workmen who destroy their own tools. You find in them superstition; but superstition, which is the religion of feeble minds, takes various shapes; and the excesses of enthusiasm are preferable to the superstitions of philosophers, whose policy is to destroy (255-257).

A few concluding paragraphs follow on the merits of the transfer from the clergy to the new owners. Is this transfer

economically beneficial? Burke asserts that what the State should look to is that capital derived from the land should be spent on that land so as to promote the agricultural industry, and also that it should be spent without injury to the moral character of the people. In any revolutionary transfer there will be many inconveniences; and these should not be faced unless the new purchasers are clearly better men, whose dispensing of the surplus gains will be more profitable for the nation. It is said the monks are lazy. But perhaps the new owners are also lazy, or they may engage in industries more harmful than laziness. Burke suspects that monkish possession is preferable to that of the monied purchaser. Under the former capital is spent in libraries, and monuments, and galleries, and museums which enlarge the human mind, and the interests of life, and the discoveries of science. Under the new purchaser most will be spent in useless luxuries. We tolerate harmful luxuries, because we do not interfere with property and liberty. The above comparison is made on the supposition of the continuance of the present state of things; but corporate bodies are more easily directed and improved than private owners are (258-263).

The concluding paragraph justifies the policy of allowing some estates to be obtained for single lives on account of eminent service, and not by inheritance. Many good ends are thus subserved (264).

Here Burke closes the middle part of his *Reflections*, in which he is mainly thinking of France as it existed before the Revolution. After a long pause he resumes his pen and searchingly examines the condition of affairs under the Revolution.

#### FIVE ESTABLISHMENTS.

The Third Division of the *Reflections* is virtually a new beginning. A considerable interval has passed since the early part was written; and as the First Division contains reflections on the events of 1789 this part contains reflections on the events of 1790. Burke remembers that a different plan of the book was at one time in his mind, but he is borne on by the excitement

of passing events ; and accordingly he reserves for a future time and another book what he “ proposed to say concerning the spirit of our British monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy as’ practically they exist.” He is to confine himself, for the present, to the changes that have been made in France. He is to remark on the new “ establishments.”

We find that, after a brief section in which the true principles of action in respect of constitutional changes are laid down, Burke proceeds to write five chapters on the five most important establishments. They are the Legislature, the Executive, the Judicature, the Army and Finance. The first three are briefly handled, except for the discussion of the electoral system by which the national representatives were to be chosen. The other two, as the departments of greatest importance in their bearing on the Revolution, are more fully dealt with. Many departments of State are thus unnoticed ; but in most cases their importance was relatively small.

If we contrast the system then in France with the more developed life of England to-day we may note the following points. The Legislature consists of King, lords and commons acting unitedly. The Judicature is independent of political life, or of such a monstrosity as popular election ; only the Cabinet contains in the Lord Chancellor an officer whose duties are partly judicial and political, and the Government have high officers as legal advisers. The Executive is the king acting through his Ministers and thus carrying into effect the laws of the land. The Cabinet consists of the Heads of about fifteen separate Departments, together with the holders of some ancient offices of dignity. These Departments carry on the work of Administration. The greatest offices are the five secretaryships of State (Home, Foreign, Indian, Colonial and War), the Treasury, and the Admiralty. Next to these are the Board of Trade (or Commerce), the Board of Local Government (including Labour), the Irish and the Scottish offices. There are also Boards of Education, Agriculture, Postal offices and Public Works. It will thus be seen that the two departments of the Army and Finance are but a small part of what comes under the supervision of a British ministry. Some of these, however, were in the eighteenth century only in embryo. But the two handled by Burke—finance and the army—were respectively the foundation

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and the security of national life. The state of the finances brought the revolution into existence; the defection of the Army made the king a helpless prisoner.

In the preliminary section (265-275) Burke asserts that the National Assembly has far exceeded its instructions and its powers. It exists neither by law nor by necessity. We are entitled to examine the mode by which power has been obtained, and the use which has been made of it. The mode is the usual one of artifice and fraud ; the use is in untried speculations from which only accidental benefits can come. All is done with confidence and arrogance. There are able men amongst them, as is shown by their eloquence. But nothing that they have done shows a comprehensive mind. Their manner is to evade difficulty. They take short cuts, and supply defect of wisdom by fulness of force. Evading difficulty they find themselves enveloped in obstacles and troubles. Their work has been destructive, but it is in construction that greatness is shown. They have contented themselves with reversing the past (265-272).

The true task consists in combining preservation and reform in such a way that the new parts are perfectly fitted to the old. In this task obstinacy and levity have to be overcome, caution and circumspection have to be used, and the aid of time must be expected. The law-giver must be a man of tender sensibility, loving his fellowmen, fearing himself, discerning his ends intuitively, but working towards them slowly, patiently, deliberately. He must not disdain assistance, and he must watch the effects of each step, provide for difficulties as they arise, and establish the harmony of the whole. Simple contrivances cannot be adapted to the multiform wants of great peoples. There must be balances, compensations, adjustments, and the reconciliation of conflicting principles. The excellence required is an excellence in composition. It cannot be fully attained in one age. Hence legislators have sought a principle capable of expansion which by its gradual operation can work out desired ends (273). With me the test of wisdom is to proceed thus, with a ruling principle possessed of creative energy. Your politicians who have no fixed principle are in reality ignorant adventurers. They are at the mercy of every empiric. This

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disregard of slow and regular methods is due not only to deficiency of comprehension, but also to malignity of nature. They have formed their opinions from the writings of satirists. Hence they see only faults, and these in an exaggerated form. Such men are unfit to be reformers. Images of goodness are unfamiliar to them. They have not cultivated the love of men. Hence they are constitutionally disposed to destroy, and in destruction they show their mischievous activity. They lay hold of paradoxes originally uttered for literary effect, and accept them seriously as grounds or motives of action. Their leader, Rousseau, put forth paradoxes to arrest attention by a new form of the marvellous, and they gravely accept his wild theories and make them guiding principles of conduct (274).

These two paragraphs (273-274) should be carefully studied as a declaration of Burke's principles of policy, and an exposure of the unwisdom of daring revolutionists.

The discussion of the SUPREME BODY (276-326) under the new system begins with the drawing of a distinction between old or long-standing and new or theoretical institutions. The old have many aberrations from theoretical perfection. These aberrations have often arisen from necessity, or the requirements of expediency. Such systems have not been based on theory, though lessons of theory are derivable from them. They receive additions or modifications from experience, and these are sometimes so great as to alter the original design and create something fundamentally better. But in any case the errors are noticed, and corrections are made which enable the vessel of the State to go forward. On the other hand a new theoretic system of men unrestrained in action should be mathematically and metaphysically perfect. At least it is matter for searching examination and free criticism (277).

The plan of the Chapter is to discuss, first, the method of the creation of the new Constitution, secondly the cementing principles that unite the parts, and thirdly, the central or ruling body.

A large number of paragraphs are devoted to an analysis of the electoral basis of the new constitution. The basis is

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triple, regard being had to territory, population, wealth. There is also a system of gradation of assemblies. This intricate system sets aside the equal rights of men; and the same thing is shown in the imposition of qualifications, slightly limiting the numbers that have votes. This elaborate scheming leads (as Burke shows) to many inconsistencies and even absurdities ; and (as he shows further on) it weakens the connection between the people and their representatives and tends to destroy responsibility (278-299).

Burke's first severe reflection is on the dividing of France into Departments or republics, virtually separate, with no constitutional guarantee of national unity. It is like the method of conquerors who destroy all vestiges of antiquity, all long-standing arrangements, all territorial boundaries, all priesthoods and nobilities, all memorials of former opinion. The revolutionaries have treated France as ancient warriors treated conquered countries (300-302). Under the new system officers do not know the districts to which they are appointed, or the people amongst whom they are to act. Old principles of subordination and discipline are also set aside; and the new equality, without associations and affections, reminds Burke of the degenerate days of later Rome (303). The earlier legislators studied human nature. They also studied civil life, and the modifications of human nature caused by education, or profession, or wealth or other circumstances of life. Hence they classified men, and studied the situations or privileges proper to each. By their skilful methods they created united commonwealths ; while the new method is to produce a homogeneous mass and then divide it into unconnected sections. They know nothing but masses and numbers, while the other conditions of situation and circumstance and character afford the true sphere for the exercise of legislative skill (304). Burke points out that this new method gives no guarantee of permanence but makes it easy for a military despotism to establish itself. And indeed the authors calculate that it will be allowed to continue as the only alternative to disorganisation (305-306).

Burke has the authority of Calonne for saying that there was a deliberate conspiracy to divide the country into confederacies. This is the cause of their intricate electoral system. Each deputy ought (as in England) to be a representative of the whole country and of all its interests. There ought to be a

standing authority, the centre of unity and the point of reference for the whole country. Such is the Government in England. It is a trustee for the whole country ; and so also are the lords and the king. Each member of Parliament is individually subject to a power which represents the whole. Hence there is no question regarding national unity. But in France every deputy is a separate part of the sovereign whole. He is not subject to any higher or directing power. There is thus no centre, and no guarantee of unity. In the English system all parts of the country are cared for whether they have representatives or not (307-308).

The system in France differs from that in England entirely. In England the member is elected directly by the whole constituency ; and a personal relationship exists between them. The people know the man and judge his fitness, and he has a sense of obligation and responsibility. A personal choice is made, and personal ties are formed. In France the member does not come into contact with the primary assemblies, that is with the body of the people. Or if he does, it is indirectly and circuitously. In reality the people do not elect. And again your members are not eligible for election to successive assemblies. The good with the bad must be set aside ; and an entirely new set of men elected. This also interferes with personal ties. Your plans are based on jealousy and distrust. But they allow ample scope to the intriguer. And, as in all the gradations there is the same changing of persons, the result is that responsibility is destroyed (309-311).

Burke now returns to the question of national unity and the means of coherence, (312-324). He finds nothing conducive thereto in the constitution of the Departments ; but other three things he notes the compulsory paper currency, the supremacy of the Capital, and the general Army. The first two of these he now examines.

The paper currency is for the present a cementing bond. But should the policy of Confiscation be successful the *assignats* will gradually be called in and will cease, and this cement will no longer exist (313). More probably the Confiscation will fail, and the paper coinage will give rise to troubles both within the Departments and in the relations of one to another. One effect of them will be to produce a monied oligarchy in

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each division. Power must fall into the hands of the managers of so vast a circulation (314). In England the Bank is powerful, though all dealings with it are voluntary. With you not only is it a compulsory money transaction ; but it has under it the arrangements of the sale of the confiscated lands so that it can, at pleasure, put lands into the market and raise or lower the prices thereof. By this means property is made subject to speculation, and loses its old stability (315). The new land-owners will not become agriculturists. They will not learn to appreciate that art, or the pleasures of rural life. They will purchase to job out again, and they will introduce into the whole country the spirit of gambling (316). The result will be that industry and economy and carefulness will cease (317). But, while all are affected by the gambling, only a few understand the game, and the great multitudes must suffer. The peasantry, for example, will be at a disadvantage compared with townsmen. The country has professedly an undue share of the representation. What good can come to them therefrom when all power is in the hands of townsmen and monied directors ? The country is incapable of immediate and united action. But townsmen can readily combine. And in this matter the money director will be supreme. France will be wholly governed by directors and trustees and attorneys and adventurers ; and in the Serbonian bog of a base oligarchy all the dreams of regeneration will disappear. It seems as if France were suffering the judgment of God on account of its past offences (318-321).

The second cementing principle is the supremacy of Paris. Paris is the centre of stock-jobbing and all intrigue. It dominates the Assembly ; it dominates the Executive ; it is endeavouring to dominate the whole country. This is the explanation of the new divisions and the removal of ancient jurisdictions. It is pretended that the old provinces are being superseded by the new idea of nationality, and that henceforward all are to be Frenchmen. But it is in the local divisions that affections are first developed ; and it is by degrees that we rise from love of village and neighbourhood, to provincial and wider patriotism. If the local affection is destroyed there can be no true national sentiment (323-324).

Burke has now spoken of the creating and cementing principle. A paragraph is added on the sovereign assembly

(325). This Assembly has every power and no control. It has no fundamental laws, or maxims, or usages, or rules, or system of any kind. Their ideas of competency are always taken at the maximum ; for the most ordinary matters they follow examples of extreme cases. After the new elections the existing elements of control will be removed. As already everything is altered they will have to search for new materials of revolution. They can only go from bad to worse.

A closing paragraph condemns the want of a Senate or Upper House. This is essential to a republic. A single Legislative and active assembly with executive officers is an unheard-of thing. Something more stable should exist, to which the people could look up, and with which foreign powers could connect themselves, and by which consistency might be preserved in the proceedings of public life. Kings usually have a council ; but such a body of exalted and permanent senators is still more needed in a republic. Burke conceives of it as something occupying an intermediate position between the House of representatives and the Executive (326).

The next Chapter (327-334) discusses the new EXECUTIVE. It is still the King, but the King degraded and made subject to the Assembly. He has no deliberative discretion, but must obey orders. His highest work is to report to the Assembly, but he is not the exclusive channel of information, and therefore his part is of little value (327).

His duties may be looked at from two sides, the civil and the political. The first refers to law and judicature ; the second to the decrees and enactments of the Assembly. With regard to the former the King is not (as he ought to be) the fountain of justice. He does not appoint the judges either of the original side or of the court of appeal. He has nothing to do with the choice ; nor is he the public prosecutor. He is simply a notary and the head of those that execute sentences. In this capacity he can neither respect himself nor be respected of others (328). On the other or political side, as the executor of the Assembly's orders, he is not a real King but only chief magistrate. Here again he is not the fountain of honour ; he cannot reward services with any title of distinction, nor can he

grant the smallest pension. He can obtain obedience only from fear. For the maintenance of internal quiet he has to send troops under the Assembly's orders. He has to enforce harsh decrees, over which he has no negative. The functions assigned to him are those that are most odious (329).

In a right system executive ministers ought to be able to love and venerate those whom they obey. Otherwise there will be no zealous discharge of duty. Cordial service cannot be enforced by law. Kings of France and England have had ministers whom they disliked but who were required by the necessities of State. These ministers were loyal, and acted in trust for their kings. But such loyalty and mutual trust cannot now exist in France. Your supreme government and executive cannot act together in harmony. It would be better, if you removed the King and appointed some new head of the Executive. Your present King must feel humiliated, and cannot act from any generous interests. Between him and ministers whom he does not appoint there must be friction. The position of the ministers also is humiliating. They do not share in the councils of the Assembly. They cannot answer attacks. Their chief motive is the feeling of responsibility and the sense of fear. But such a feeling, while it may deter from crimes will never create zealous service. How can wars be carried on, or treaties be negotiated, by those who have no voice or choice in the policy? You say the next King will be educated to this lower situation. The expectation is contrary to Nature (330-332).

Again it is absurd to have two central establishments of government, one under the Assembly, another under the King. The excuse is that the people would not part with the monarchy. But if the King was to be kept it should have been with fitting power and dignity. For example he should have the right, under proper control, to make wars and treaties. Only thus can foreign powers be kept from negotiating with members of the Assembly. It is rumoured that the ministry are about to resign. No wonder; they execute without power, are responsible without freedom, and have to deliberate without the right of choice. Nekker has lived to see financial ruin (333-334).

R. K.

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The next Chapter (336-344) deals with equal brevity with the new system of JUDICATURE. Three or four paragraphs are devoted to the parlements now abolished. The courts called parlements occupy an important place in French history. They claimed to be as ancient as the Monarchy, and to have functions of control on the acts of government. On the other hand the Kings claimed that they were the sole source of power, that registration was a merely formal thing, and that, when they chose, they were absolute. During the greater part of the eighteenth century a state of conflict existed between them and the Court, in consequence of which they were forcibly abolished in 1771, though again revived. On that occasion Burke described the parlement of Paris as "that faithful repository of the laws, and remembrancer of the ancient rights of the people." They were however, aristocratic bodies, out of sympathy with movements of reform; and though they opposed the Jesuits they also opposed toleration. Popular feeling towards them varied from time to time. Burke's argument is as follows: They needed reform, with adaptation to modern life, and the methods of a free constitution. But they had merits which should have been preserved. In the first place, as the members had life appointments they were independent. This is the fundamental necessity. The judicial authority should in some degree balance the supreme power which has called it into existence. It should be a security for its justice against its might. It therefore should be something exterior and independent. The parlements were also calculated to keep alive the ancient laws, and to give them certainty or stability. They were checks on arbitrary innovations, whether these were due to Kings, or factions, or the humours of the nation. They preserved the memory and the record of the constitution. They also made private property secure (336). They were correctives to the monarchy, but such correctives are still more needed in a republican system. Your new elective judges will be dependent, unjust to the unpopular, influenced by political motives, and factious (337).

A historic parallel may be seen in the Athenian Areopagus. That aristocratic body was in the earlier days of Greece a balance and corrective to a fickle democracy. And it was preserved with veneration. Charges of pecuniary corruption are brought against the parlements, but the attempt to prove it has twice failed (338).

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These parlements had the powers of registration and remonstrance, a power very valuable when governing bodies rule by decrees. Unless such decrees are tested by the general principles of jurisprudence they soon disturb the general spirit and consistency of the laws. Your present manner of allowing remonstrance (but not negative) to the King shows ignorance of the true work both of legislation and of execution (339-340).

According to your new method you are to appoint judges who undertake to obey the Assembly and who are, at some future time, to receive from the Assembly a code of laws. Opposition between the local body who appoints and the Assembly will probably arise. Meanwhile we see in one of the chief courts judges forcibly compelled to condemn; and persons who have been acquitted have been murdered at the door (341).

It is also provided that administrative bodies are not to be subject to the new tribunals. Administrative bodies should be kept to duty, and protected in the discharge thereof. In your case they are the instruments of the political leaders, and for that reason they are exempted. You say they are responsible to the Assembly, which however is not a legal body (343).

There is to be a grand court of supreme judicature to try offences against the nation, by which they mean the Assembly. Burke rightly prophesies that this may become the most dreadful tyranny ever known. Paris, where the mob and the extremists rule, is no place for such a tribunal (344).

A longer Chapter (345-368) on the ARMY follows. Burke quotes from the French War Minister to show that indiscipline prevails and that authority is despised; that the army is ceasing to be an instrument and that a military democracy is to be feared. An alarming symptom is the frequency of political meetings amongst the soldiers (347-350). Burke thinks the evil is worse than du Pin acknowledges; and he does not share in surprise. It is the natural effect of the doctrines preached and the events that have taken place. In such circumstances what does the War Minister propose to do? Instead of the stern discipline required, he proposes fresh oaths for men that have no regard for oaths and no belief in God. And he issues

directions in favour of the mingling of soldiers with citizens in civic entertainments. This will only aggravate the disease (351-354). Another evil is the usurpation by the governments of the departments of authority over the army. The only right these local governments possess is the right of requisition. But they assume the powers of the ministry of war (355). Similarly the navy is usurping power over some of the municipalities. It is a miserable situation for a veteran officer to be concerned in (356).

In France all things are in a jumble, and the military anarchy reveals the civil confusion. The proposal is to cure the evils by the evils, and to humour the soldiers by giving them a debauched interest in the life of the cities. The effect of the confederacies will be that the soldiers will associate with the lowest classes. This monstrous system of policy will lead to increased disorder and bloodshed. In a true state of matters the officer should be in the eye of the soldier everything. In your system the officer is to rule by patience and electioneering arts. (357-358).

Your system of appointing officers will prove mischievous. They are nominated by the King, and must therefore solicit at court. But the Assembly has a negative, and therefore virtually the appointment; and hence there will be intrigues in the Assembly. Opposite factions will be formed; and discontent will arise against the Assembly or the Crown or both. The method of seniority is also objectionable. It does not advance the best men; and it tends to make the army more independent. The result in any case is the loss of authority by the King. He will be either despised or pitied. Problems of the relations between the army and the crown will soon arise. The Assembly also will suffer. The army will not continue obedient to pleaders. After a period of faction some popular general will command support and become the master of the whole country (359-360).

The present power of the Assembly has been attained by an atrocious method, by interference with the obedience of the soldiers. That obedience is the central point on which all depends. Soon the soldiers will imitate citizens in demanding the power to elect officers as a natural right. And they will claim all the liberties of the municipal Guard. When difficulties arise in administration or local government you must resort to force;

and the army may refuse to coerce fellow-citizens. Again the Colonies claim free trade, and you send troops against them. Confusion everywhere follows from your rights of man. Your peasantry refuse to pay taxes which you have condemned; and your only answer is the despatch of troops. They know that the land rents belong to the abolished feudal system; but while you teach the new doctrine you fail to redress the grievance. The peasantry are the descendants of ancient land-owners; but if this cannot be proved they have the rights of man. They consider that, by these rights, the land belongs to the cultivator, and they deny the title of the landlord. You answer them with dragoons. They tell you that king and nobles are discredited, that all are equal, and that they repudiate the authority of the burghers of Paris. They complain that you disregard their necessities while humouring your own fancies, and that in coercing them you are grossly inconsistent (361-365).

Such arguments are horrible, but they are conclusive against you. And the only reason why you now take the side of property is that you may maintain the value of the confiscated Church lands. (366).

Municipalities also (367) are repudiating taxes; correctly denying your authority; and them also you answer with troops. The last resort of kings is the first with you. But after a little it will fail. The soldiers, at present pleased with increase of pay, obey you now, but they will not continue to do so.

The concluding paragraph (368) refers to the armies, or guards, of the Municipalities. These are democratic local bodies, and so far less exceptionable. But if regarded from a national point of view, with reference to crown or assembly, or courts of justice, or the national army, or the coherence of the republics they constitute something monstrous. No worse preservative of a national constitution was ever devised.

The closing chapter (370-395) is on FINANCE; which was the subject of primary importance at the time, inasmuch as the difficulties due to insufficient revenue were the occasion and main cause of the summoning of the States-general. Here then

was a grand opportunity of showing economic and administrative skill. Burke begins with a magnificent paragraph in which he indicates the supreme importance of the subject. A sufficient and inoppressive revenue is the source or spring of all public virtue. It enables the body politic to display whatever high qualities may belong to it. It affords nourishment and growth to all the greater virtues and the finer arts ; and not only to the virtues of generosity or power or foresight but to those also of self-denial and rigid watchfulness. Rightly therefore is Political Economy placed high among the sciences. It is a science that grows with the wealth of nations ; and with the growth of revenue there is also the growth of national prosperity. And such growth will continue so long as a due balance is maintained between what men have to contribute to the State and what they are allowed to keep as the basis of private industry.

The ordinary objects or aims of a sound financier are to secure an abundant revenue ; to raise it with judgment and equality, that is to say, on principles that are just and fair and well-proportioned to income ; and to employ it with economy. By these aims, Burke tests the achievements of the Revolution (371).

As to ample revenue he finds that there is now a vast deficit. This alone is a proof of exceptional incapacity (372). The Assembly committed a gross blunder in denouncing the tax on salt when they were not able to remove it. Consequently a proposed re-arrangement among the provinces was not accepted, and the salt provinces at last repudiated their burden (373-374). As to equality, or fairness of imposition, we find that they had recourse to the method of voluntary contribution, which is in reality, a tax on virtue. Next, this was supplemented by the patriotic donation, a system by which articles of great value to the possessor went to the State which received very little for them. Herein they imitated an obsolete method of the old despotism. The chief condemnation of such methods is their want of provision and prevision for future years. They cut off the springs or fountains of continuous supply (375-376). Other schemes they have which it is premature to judge. Meanwhile they trust to the paper currency which, they imagine, is an aid in England. But the voluntary English notes are representative of opulence, while the assignats are representative of want (377). On the third point, economy, it is clear that notwithstanding deficits they are ruling with extravagance. All round they are

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increasing appointments and rates of pay. The new government is more prodigal than the old (378).

The second main consideration has reference to Credit. For security thereof there should be clear and open proceedings, exact calculations, and a perfect guarantee of funds. Burke does not find that any foreign commercial country is eager or ready to offer loans. This is because they have no confidence in the French methods (379). The French disregard ordinary care because of their faith in the *assignats*, which is childish and desperate. To establish credit on a Land-bank they should act as men do when properties are mortgaged; exhibiting gross value, charges, encumbrances, and net-surplus; vesting in trustees, and at the proper time admitting the public creditor (380-382). This was doubly necessary because of their pledge first to make provision for the church and then to devote the remainder, disengaged of charges, to the exigencies of the State (384). On this assurance being given, they issued *assignats* to the value of four hundred million francs. And it now appears that there is no surplus; but on the contrary, the church expenses far exceed the income of the estates. They cannot calculate. And there are other charges on the estates; the interest on loans, and the pensions of the disbanded judges and other officers. But apart from minor encumbrances they have failed to produce an estimate of the general expense of the new clerical establishments. Everything was left vague and uncertain (385-388). Other difficulties arise, such as the depreciation of paper and the advantage gained therefrom by the revenue collectors, (389). The old scheme of Mr. Law, recognised as a historic fraud, had a far better basis, and was not promoted by violence. Now every thing is ignoble (390-391). But you pretend that you relieved the people. They relieved themselves. Yet Mr. Bailly speaks of "distress and misery" in Paris. People cannot be relieved by the destruction of the public estate (392-393). Here, closing his argument, Burke puts the question whether it is better to pay largely and receive great gains in consequence, or to pay slightly and gain almost nothing. Burke prefers the former condition, which is an accompaniment of prosperity. And he repeats that to keep a due balance between the power of acquisition and the satisfying of the State's demands is the fundamental duty in finance. The means of acquisition must, before all things, be

secure; and to this end good order, reverence for law, and respect for property must be firmly established. Details of finance have their own importance, but these other considerations are supreme (394-395).

In the concluding paragraphs (396-400) Burke reverts to the idea of liberty, and that combination of freedom with restraint which is implied in the words "free government." He again commends a cautious and conservative manner in reforming (398), and forecasts for France a future of suffering before settlement (399). Finally he refers to the accusations against himself. Especially was there apparent inconsistency between his policy now and his action in the former great questions of his life-time. The difference, however, is not in opinion or teaching so much as in attitude. Burke explains it by his metaphor of equipoise. He desires to assist in steadyi <sup>g</sup> the vessel of the State. It may be added that he had the instinct of chivalry, which prompted him not only to defend the causes of liberty but also to aid minorities, and to render what help he could to the injured and the helpless.

REFLECTIONS  
ON  
THE REVOLUTION IN FRANCE,  
AND

ON THE PROCEEDINGS IN CERTAIN SOCIETIES IN LONDON  
RELATIVE TO THAT EVENT :

IN A LETTER

INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN SENT TO A GENTLEMAN IN PARIS.

1790.

IT may not be unnecessary to inform the reader, that the following Reflections had their origin in a correspondence between the Author and a very young gentleman at Paris, who did him the honour of desiring his opinion upon the important transactions which then, and ever since, have so much occupied the attention of all men. An answer was written some time in the month of October, 1789 ; but it was kept back upon prudential considerations. That letter is alluded to in the beginning of the following sheets. It has been since forwarded to the person to whom it was addressed. The reasons for the delay in sending it were assigned in a short letter to the same gentleman. This produced on his part a new and pressing application for the Author's sentiments.

The Author began a second and more full discussion on the subject. This he had some thoughts of publishing early in the last spring ; but, the matter gaining upon him, he found that what he had undertaken not only far exceeded the measure of a letter, but that its

Origin of the  
*Reflections.*

A former Letter  
(Oct. 1789)  
was withheld for  
a time ;

but after renew-  
ed request was  
transmitted.

The present  
work was in-  
tended for publi-  
cation six months  
earlier.

Fuller consideration proved necessary.

The epistolary form adhered to.

Hesitation in answering a French correspondent.

Burke writes on his own individual responsibility.

He desires true liberty in France,

and the means of its maintenance.

Action of two English clubs.

importance required rather a more detailed consideration than at that time he had any leisure to bestow upon it. However, having thrown down his first thoughts in the form of a letter, and, indeed, when he sat down to write, having intended it for a private letter, he found it difficult to change the form of address, when his sentiments had grown into a greater extent, and had received another direction. A different plan, he is sensible, might be more favourable to a commodious division and distribution of his matter.

DEAR SIR,

I. You are pleased to call again, and with some earnestness, for my thoughts on the late proceedings in France. I will not give you reason to imagine that I think my sentiments of such value as to wish myself to be solicited about them. They are of too little consequence to be very anxiously either communicated or withheld. It was from attention to you, and to you only, that I hesitated at the time when you first desired to receive them. In the first letter I had the honour to write to you, and which at length I send, I wrote neither for nor from any description of men; nor shall I in this. My errors, if any, are my own. My reputation alone is to answer for them.

2. You see, Sir, by the long letter I have transmitted to you, that though I do most heartily wish that France may be animated by a spirit of rational liberty, and that I think you bound, in all honest policy, to provide a permanent body in which that spirit may reside, and an effectual organ by which it may act, it is my misfortune to entertain great doubts concerning several material points in your late transactions.

3. You imagined, when you wrote last, that I might possibly be reckoned among the approvers of certain proceedings in France, from

the solemn public seal of sanction they have received from two clubs of gentlemen in London, called the Constitutional Society, and the Revolution Society.

4. I certainly have the honour to belong to more clubs than one, in which the constitution of this kingdom, and the principles of the glorious Revolution, are held in high reverence : and I reckon myself among the most forward in my zeal for maintaining that constitution 10 and those principles in their utmost purity and vigour. It is because I do so that I think it necessary for me that there should be no mistake. Those who cultivate the memory of our Revolution, and those who are attached to the constitution of this kingdom, will take good care how they are involved with persons who, under the pretext of zeal towards the Revolution and constitution, too frequently wander from their true principles ; and are ready on every occasion to depart from the firm but cautious and deliberate spirit which produced the one, and which presides in the other. Before I proceed to answer the more material particulars in your letter, I shall beg leave to give you such information as I have been able to obtain of the two clubs which have thought proper, as bodies, to interfere in the concerns of France ; first assuring you that I am not, and that I have never been, a member of either 20 30 of those societies.

5. The first, calling itself the Constitutional Society, or Society for Constitutional Information, or by some such title, is, I believe, of seven or eight years standing. The institution of this society appears to be of a charitable, and so far of a laudable nature : it was intended for the circulation, at the expense of the members, of many books, which few others would be at the expense of buying ; and which might lie on the hands of the booksellers, to 40

Burke also is a member of clubs and is devoted to the Revolution of 1688.

Some pretending the same thing widely depart from the principles that then prevailed.

What Burke knows of these two clubs which have been so forward.

The constitutional Society is of recent origin.

Its object, the circulation of books

not in demand.

## REFLECTIONS ON

Attempt to find  
a market in  
France.

Neither the  
publications nor  
the proceedings  
are much esteemed  
here.

The French  
Assembly have  
themselves re-  
garded it as in-  
ferior,

but have shown  
marked respect  
to the other club:

which has be-  
come a sort of  
French com-  
mittee,

to be regarded  
as a privileged  
international  
body! risen from  
obscurity.

the great loss of a useful body of men. Whether the books, so charitably circulated, were ever as charitably read, is more than I know. Possibly several of them have been exported to France; and, like goods not in request here, may with you have found a market. I have heard much talk of the lights to be drawn from books that are sent from hence. What improvements they have had in their passage

10 (as it is said some liquors are meliorated by crossing the sea) I cannot tell: but I never heard a man of common judgment, or the least degree of information speak a word in praise of the greater part of the publications circulated by that society; nor have their proceedings been accounted, except by some of themselves, as of any serious consequence.

6. Your National Assembly seems to entertain much the same opinion that I do of this  
20 poor charitable club. As a nation, you reserved the whole stock of your eloquent acknowledgments for the Revolution Society; when their fellows in the Constitutional were, in equity, entitled to some share. Since you have selected the Revolution Society as the great object of your national thanks and praises, you will think me excusable in making its late conduct the subject of my observations. The National Assembly of France has given importance to these gentlemen by adopting them; and they return the favour, by acting as a committee in England for extending the principles of the National Assembly. Henceforward we must consider them as a kind of privileged persons; as no inconsiderable members in the diplomatic body. This is one among the revolutions which have given splendour to obscurity, and distinction to undiscerned merit. Until very lately I do not recollect to have heard of this  
30 club. I am quite sure that it never occupied a moment of my thoughts; nor, I believe, those  
40

of any person out of their own set. I find, upon inquiry, that on the anniversary of the Revolution in 1688, a club of dissenters, but of what denomination I know not, have long had the custom of hearing a sermon in one of their churches ; and that afterwards they spent the day cheerfully, as other clubs do, at the tavern. But I never heard that any public measure, or political system, much less that the merits of the constitution of any foreign nation, had been the subject of a formal proceeding at their festivals ; until, to my inexpressible surprise, I found them in a sort of public capacity, by a congratulatory address, giving an authoritative sanction to the proceedings of the National Assembly in France.

7. In the ancient principles and conduct of the club, so far at least as they were declared, I see nothing to which I could take exception. I think it very probable that, for some purpose, new members may have entered among them ; and that some truly Christian politicians, who love to dispense benefits, but are careful to conceal the hand which distributes the dole, may have made them the instruments of their pious designs. Whatever I may have reason to suspect concerning private management, I shall speak of nothing as of a certainty but what is public.

8. For one, I should be sorry to be thought, directly or indirectly, concerned in their proceedings. I certainly take my full share, along with the rest of the world, in my individual and private capacity, in speculating on what has been done, or is doing, on the public stage ; in any place ancient or modern ; in the republic of Rome, or the republic of Paris : but having no general apostolical mission, being a citizen of a particular state, and being bound up, in a considerable degree, by its public will, I should think it at least improper

Hitherto it was an obscure dissenting club, not known to interfere actively with public affairs at home or abroad.

Its former conduct was unexceptionable, but some new questionable elements have entered and made it a tool for their designs.

Within due limits Burke takes interest in all nations,

and in past history ;

but he would not enter into personal correspondence with a foreign power.

Still less would he act so as to produce an unreal impression of public importance.

The House of Commons is careful in such matters.

You have effusively welcomed the insignificant as if they were a representative body.

Their resolution should have had the signatures attached, so that the wisdom behind it might be known.

and irregular for me to open a formal public correspondence with the actual government of a foreign nation, without the express authority of the government under which I live.

9. I should be still more unwilling to enter into that correspondence under anything like an equivocal description, which to many, unacquainted with our usages, might make 10 the address, in which I joined, appear as the act of persons in some sort of corporate capacity, acknowledged by the laws of this kingdom, and authorised to speak the sense of some part of it. On account of the ambiguity and uncertainty of unauthorised general descriptions, and of the deceit which may be practised under them, and not from mere formality, the House of Commons would reject the most sneaking petition for the most trifling object, 20 under that mode of signature to which you have thrown open the folding doors of your presence-chamber, and have ushered into your National Assembly, with as much ceremony and parade, and with as great a bustle of applause, as if you had been visited by the whole representative majesty of the whole English nation. If what this society has thought proper to send forth had been a piece of argument, it would have signified little whose argument 30 it was. It would be neither the more nor the less convincing on account of the party it came from. But this is only a vote and resolution. It stands solely on authority; and in this case it is the mere authority of individuals, few of whom appear. Their signatures ought, in my opinion, to have been annexed to their instrument. The world would then have the means of knowing how many they are; who they are; and of what value their opinions may be, from 40 their personal abilities, from their knowledge, their experience, or their lead and authority

in this state. To me, who am but a plain man, the proceeding looks a little too refined, and too ingenious ; it has too much the air of a political stratagem, adopted for the sake of giving, under a high-sounding name, an importance to the public declarations of this club, which, when the matter came to be closely inspected, they did not altogether so well deserve. It is a policy that has very much the complexion of a fraud.

10

It seems a fraudulent device.

10. I flatter myself that I love a manly, moral, regulated liberty as well as any gentleman of that society, be he who he will ; and perhaps I have given as good proofs of my attachment to that cause, in the whole course of my public conduct. I think I envy liberty as little as they do, to any other nation. But I cannot stand forward and give praise or blame to anything which relates to human actions and human concerns, on a simple view of the object, 20 as it stands stripped of every relation, in all the nakedness and solitude of metaphysical abstraction. Circumstances (which with some gentlemen pass for nothing) give in reality to every political principle its distinguishing colour and discriminating effect. The circumstances are what render every civil and political scheme beneficial or noxious to mankind. Abstractedly speaking, government, as well as liberty, is good ; yet could I, in common sense, ten years ago, have felicitated France on her enjoyment of a government (for she then had a government) without inquiry what the nature of that government was, or how it was administered ? Can I now congratulate the same nation upon its freedom ? Is it because liberty in the abstract may be classed amongst the blessings of mankind, that I am seriously to felicitate a madman, who has escaped from the protecting restraint and wholesome darkness of his cell, on his restoration

20

Human affairs  
are complex.

30

So of govern-  
ment, which may  
be good or bad.

40

Is the freedom  
of a madman or  
of a robber to be  
approved of ?

Such approval would be folly.

Liberty must be carefully tested.

It should be watched until its settled consequences are seen.

Flattery is always injurious.

Does it harmonise with national prosperity and social good ?

Liberty in the case of individuals may be licence.

In the case of large bodies the danger is greater.

to the enjoyment of light and liberty ? Am I to congratulate an highwayman and murderer, who has broke prison, upon the recovery of his natural rights ? This would be to act over again the scene of the criminals condemned to the gallies, and their heroic deliverer, the metaphysic Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance.

II. When I see the spirit of liberty in action, I see a strong principle at work ; and this, for a while, is all I can possibly know of it. The wild *gas*, the fixed air, is plainly broke loose : but we ought to suspend our judgment until the first effervescence is a little subsided, till the liquor is cleared, and until we see something deeper than the agitation of a troubled and frothy surface. I must be tolerably sure, before I venture publicly to congratulate men upon a blessing, that they have really received one. Flattery corrupts both the receiver and the giver ; and adulation is not of more service to the people than to kings. I should therefore suspend my congratulations on the new liberty of France, until I was informed how it had been combined with government ; with public force ; with the discipline and obedience of armies ; with the collection of an effective and well-distributed revenue ; with morality and religion ; with the solidity of property ; with peace and order ; with civil and social manners. All these (in their way) are good things too ; and, without them, liberty is not a benefit whilst it lasts, and is not likely to continue long. The effect of liberty to individuals is, that they may do what they please : we ought to see what it will please them to do, before we risk congratulations, which may be soon turned into complaints. Prudence would dictate this in the case of separate, insulated, private men ; but liberty, when men act in bodies, is power. Considerate people, before they declare

themselves, will observe the use which is made of *power*; and particularly of so trying a thing as *new* power in *new* persons, of whose principles, tempers, and dispositions, they have little or no experience, and in situations where those who appear the most stirring in the scene may possibly not be the real movers.

12. All these considerations, however, were below the transcendental dignity of the Revolution Society. Whilst I continued in the country, 10 from whence I had the honour of writing to you, I had but an imperfect idea of their transactions. On my coming to town, I sent for an account of their proceedings, which had been published by their authority, containing a sermon of Dr. Price, with the Duke de Rochefoucault's and the Archbishop of Aix's letter, and several other documents annexed. The whole of that publication, with the manifest design of connecting the affairs of France with 20 those of England, by drawing us into an imitation of the conduct of the National Assembly, gave me a considerable degree of uneasiness. The effect of that conduct upon the power, credit, prosperity, and tranquillity of France, became every day more evident. The form of constitution to be settled, for its future polity, became more clear. We are now in a condition to discern, with tolerable exactness, the true nature of the object held up to our imitation. If the prudence of reserve and decorum dictates silence in some circumstances, in others prudence of a higher order may justify us in speaking our thoughts. The beginnings of confusion with us in England are at present feeble enough; but with you, we have seen an infancy still more feeble, growing by moments into a strength to heap mountains upon mountains, and to wage war with Heaven itself. Whenever our neighbour's house is 30 on fire, it cannot be amiss for the engines to play a little on our own. Better to be

Thoughtful  
men will wait  
and see.

The documents  
published show  
an intention to  
raise in England  
the questions  
raised in France.

The policy is  
plainly injuring  
France.

Their future  
is ominous.

It is time to  
speak out.

Revolutions  
advance rapidly.

Let us take precautions.

Burke's purpose and plan in this book.

The epistolary form.

The extraordinary occasion.

Contrast of aims and methods.

Incapacity.

An unnatural scene.

Other opinions and sentiments.

The whole reckoned praiseworthy.

despised for too anxious apprehensions, than ruined by too confident a security.

13. Solicitous chiefly for the peace of my own country, but by no means unconcerned for yours, I wish to communicate more largely, what was at first intended only for your private satisfaction. I shall still keep your affairs in my eye, and continue to address myself to you. Indulging myself in the freedom of epistolary intercourse, I beg leave to throw out my thoughts, and express my feelings, just as they arise in my mind, with very little attention to formal method. I set out with the proceedings of the Revolution Society; but I shall not confine myself to them. Is it possible I should? It appears to me as if I were in a great crisis, not of the affairs of France alone, but of all Europe, perhaps of more than Europe. All circumstances taken together, the French Revolution is the most astonishing that has hitherto happened in the world. The most wonderful things are brought about in many instances by means the most absurd and ridiculous; in the most ridiculous modes; and, apparently, by the most contemptible instruments. Everything seems out of nature in this strange chaos of levity and ferocity, and of all sorts of crimes jumbled together with all sorts of follies. In viewing this monstrous tragi-comic scene, the most opposite passions necessarily succeed, and sometimes mix with each other in the mind: alternate contempt and indignation; alternate laughter and tears; alternate scorn and horror.

14. It cannot however be denied that to some this strange scene appeared in quite another point of view. Into them it inspired no other sentiments than those of exultation and rapture. They saw nothing in what has been done in France, but a firm and temperate

exertion of freedom; so consistent, on the whole, with morals and with piety, as to make it deserving not only of the secular applause of dashing Machiavelian politicians, but to render it a fit theme for all the devout effusions of sacred eloquence.

15. On the forenoon of the 4th of November last, Doctor Richard Price, a non-conforming minister of eminence, preached at the dissenting meeting-house of the Old Jewry, to his club or society, a very extraordinary miscellaneous sermon, in which there are some good moral and religious sentiments, and not ill expressed, mixed up in a sort of porridge of various political opinions and reflections; but the Revolution in France is the grand ingredient in the cauldron. I consider the address transmitted by the Revolution Society to the National Assembly, through Earl Stanhope, as originating in the principles of the sermon, and as a corollary from them. It was moved by the preacher of that discourse. It was passed by those who came reeking from the effect of the sermon, without any censure or qualification, expressed or implied. If, however, any of the gentlemen concerned shall wish to separate the sermon from the resolution, they know how to acknowledge the one, and to disavow the other. They may do it: I cannot.

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Price's incongruous sermon

is the basis of the address and resolution sent to France.

The two are virtually the same.

The manifesto of a political intriguer.

Why he is an oracle.

16. For my part, I looked on that sermon as the public declaration of a man much connected with literary caballers, and intriguing philosophers; with political theologians, and theological politicians, both at home and abroad. I know they set him up as a sort of oracle; because, with the best intentions in the world, he naturally *philippises*, and chaunts his prophetic song in exact unison with their designs.

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A parallel in  
the Civil War.

Intolerance.

The true office  
of the pulpit.

The wrong  
mingling of sepa-  
rate spheres.

Raw politicians.

Parts of the  
Sermon are less  
dangerous.

17. That sermon is in a strain which I believe has not been heard in this kingdom, in any of the pulpits which are tolerated or encouraged in it, since the year 1648, when a predecessor of Dr. Price, the Rev. Hugh Peters, made the vault of the king's own chapel at St. James's ring with the honour and privilege of the Saints, who, with the "high praises of God in their mouths,  
 10 and a *two-edged sword* in their hands, were to execute judgment on the heathen, and punishments upon the *people*; to bind their *kings* with chains, and their *nobles* with fetters of iron."<sup>1</sup> Few harangues from the pulpit, except in the days of your league in France, or in the days of our solemn league and covenant in England, have ever breathed less of the spirit of moderation than this lecture in the Old Jewry. Supposing, however, that  
 20 something like moderation were visible in this political sermon; yet politics and the pulpit are terms that have little agreement. No sound ought to be heard in the church but the healing voice of Christian charity. The cause of civil liberty and civil government gains as little as that of religion by this confusion of duties. Those who quit their proper character, to assume what does not belong to them, are, for the greater part,  
 30 ignorant both of the character they leave, and of the character they assume. Wholly unacquainted with the world in which they are so fond of meddling, and inexperienced in all its affairs, on which they pronounce with so much confidence, they have nothing of politics but the passions they excite. Surely the church is a place where one day's truce ought to be allowed to the dissensions and animosities of mankind.
- 40 18. This pulpit style, revived after so long a discontinuance, had to me the air of novelty,

<sup>1</sup> Psalm cxlix.

and of a novelty not wholly without danger. I do not charge this danger equally to every part of the discourse. The hint given to a noble and reverend lay-divine, who is supposed high in office in one of our universities,<sup>1</sup> and to other lay-divines "of *rank* and literature," may be proper and seasonable, though somewhat new. If the noble *Seekers* should find nothing to satisfy their pious fancies in the old staple of the national church, or in all the rich variety to be found in the well-assorted warehouses of the dissenting congregations, Dr. Price advises them to improve upon non-conformity; and to set up, each of them, a separate meeting-house upon his own particular principles.<sup>2</sup> It is somewhat remarkable that this reverend divine should be so earnest for setting up new churches, and so perfectly indifferent concerning the doctrine which may be taught in them. His zeal is of a curious character. It is not for the propagation of his own opinions, but of any opinions. It is not for the diffusion of truth, but for the spreading of contradiction. Let the noble teachers but dissent, it is no matter from whom or from what. This great point once secured, it is taken for granted their religion will be rational and manly. I doubt whether religion would reap all the benefits which the calculating divine computes from this "great company of great preachers." It would certainly be a valuable addition of nondescripts to the ample collection of known classes, genera and species,

The ludicrous invitation to some noblemen to become dissenting preachers.

Disregard for doctrine, variety being welcomed.

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A new unclassed specimen, and a newstyle of amusement.

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<sup>1</sup> *Discourse on the Love of our Country*, Nov. 4th, 1789, by Dr. Richard Price, 3rd edition, pp. 17 and 18.

<sup>2</sup> "Those who dislike that mode of worship which is prescribed by public authority, ought, if they can find no worship *out* of the church which they approve, *to set up a separate worship for themselves*; and by doing this, and giving an example of a rational and manly worship, men of *weight* from their *rank* and literature may do the greatest service to society and the world."—Page 18, Dr. Price's Sermon.

Proposed restrictions.

Probably they will not be warlike and heroic.

Burke's stipulations are not severe.

A more serious point :

the basis of king-  
ly power.

Monarchies condemned at large.

- which at present beautify the *hortus siccus* of dissent. A sermon from a noble duke, or a noble marquis, or a noble earl, or baron bold, would certainly increase and diversify the amusements of this town, which begins to grow satiated with the uniform round of its vapid dissipations. I should only stipulate that these new *Mess-Johns* in robes and coronets should keep some sort of bounds in
- 10 the democratic and levelling principles which are expected from their titled pulpits. The new evangelists will, I dare say, disappoint the hopes that are conceived of them. They will not become, literally as well as figuratively, polemic divines, nor be disposed so to drill their congregations that they may, as in former blessed times, preach their doctrines to regiments of dragoons and corps of infantry and artillery. Such arrangements, however 20 favourable to the cause of compulsory freedom, civil and religious, may not be equally conducive to the national tranquillity. These few restrictions I hope are no great stretches of intolerance, no very violent exertions of despotism.
19. But I may say of our preacher, "*utinam nugis tota illa dedisset tempora sævitiae.*"— All things in this his fulminating bull are not of so innoxious a tendency. His doctrines 30 affect our constitution in its vital parts. He tells the Revolution Society in this political sermon that his Majesty "is almost the *only* lawful king in the world, because the *only* one who owes his crown to the *choice of his people.*" As to the kings of *the world*, all of whom (except one) this archpontiff of the *rights of men*, with all the plenitude, and with more than the boldness of the papal deposing power in its meridian fervour of the twelfth 40 century, puts into one sweeping clause of ban and anathema, and proclaims usurpers by circles of longitude and latitude, over the whole

globe, it behoves them to consider how they admit into their territories these apostolic missionaries, who are to tell their subjects they are not lawful kings. That is their concern. It is ours, as a domestic interest of some moment, seriously to consider the solidity of the *only* principle upon which these gentlemen acknowledge a king of Great Britain to be entitled to their allegiance.

20. This doctrine, as applied to the prince now on the British throne, either is nonsense, and therefore neither true nor false, or it affirms a most unfounded, dangerous, illegal, and unconstitutional position. According to this spiritual doctor of politics, if his Majesty does not owe his crown to the choice of his people, he is no *lawful king*. Now nothing can be more untrue than that the crown of this kingdom is so held by his Majesty. Therefore, if you follow their rule, the king of Great Britain, who most certainly does not owe his high office to any form of popular election, is in no respect better than the rest of the gang of usurpers who reign, or rather rob, all over the face of this our miserable world, without any sort of right or title to the allegiance of their people. The policy of this general doctrine, so qualified, is evident enough. The propagators of this political gospel are in hopes that their abstract principle (their principle that a popular choice is necessary to the legal existence of the sovereign magistracy) would be overlooked, whilst the king of Great Britain was not affected by it. In the meantime the ears of their congregations would be gradually habituated to it, as if it were a first principle admitted without dispute. For the present it would only operate as a theory, pickled in the preserving juices of pulpit eloquence, and laid by for future use. *Condo et compono quæ mox depromere possim.* By this policy, whilst our government is soothed with a reservation in

The question  
for us.

A dangerous  
position, disquali-  
fying the British  
King.

The skilful de-  
sign :

to make the doc-  
trine familiar

and at the pro-  
per time apply it;

40 the monarchy  
being unconsci-  
ously undermin-  
ed.

Meanwhile if challenged they find subterfuges.

By referring to a distant past they tacitly admit inheritance.

All monarchies began with some sort of choice.

Our king to-day reigns by law;

its favour, to which it has no claim, the security, which it has in common with all governments, so far as opinion is security, is taken away.

21. Thus these politicians proceed, whilst little notice is taken of their doctrines ; but when they come to be examined upon the plain meaning of their words and the direct tendency of their doctrines, then equivocations 10 and slippery constructions come into play. When they say the king owes his crown to the choice of his people, and is therefore the only lawful sovereign in the world, they will perhaps tell us they mean to say no more than that some of the king's predecessors have been called to the throne by some sort of choice ; and therefore he owes his crown to the choice of his people. Thus, by a miserable subterfuge, they hope to render their proposition 20 safe, by rendering it nugatory. They are welcome to the asylum they seek for their offence, since they take refuge in their folly. For, if you admit this interpretation, how does their idea of election differ from our idea of inheritance ? And how does the settlement of the crown in the Brunswick line derived from James the First come to legalise our monarchy, rather than that of any of the neighbouring countries ? At some time or other, to be sure, 30 all the beginners of dynasties were chosen by those who called them to govern. There is ground enough for the opinion that all the kingdoms of Europe were, at a remote period, elective, with more or fewer limitations in the objects of choice. But whatever kings might have been here, or elsewhere, a thousand years ago, or in whatever manner the ruling dynasties of England or France may have begun, the king of Great Britain is at this day king by a fixed rule of succession, according to the laws 40 of his country ; and whilst the legal conditions of the compact of sovereignty are

performed by him (as they are performed), he holds his crown in contempt of the choice of the Revolution Society, who have not a single vote for a king amongst them, either individually or collectively; though I make no doubt they would soon erect themselves into an electoral college, if things were ripe to give effect to their claim. His Majesty's heirs and successors, each in his time and order, will come to the crown with the same contempt of their choice with which his Majesty has succeeded to that he wears.

22. Whatever may be the success of evasion in explaining away the gross error of *fact*, which supposes that his Majesty (though he holds it in concurrence with the wishes) owes his crown to the choice of his people, yet nothing can evade their full explicit declaration, concerning the principle of a right in the people to choose; which right is directly maintained and tenaciously adhered to. All the oblique insinuations concerning election bottom in this proposition, and are referable to it. Lest the foundation of the king's exclusive legal title should pass for a mere rant of adulatory freedom, the political divine proceeds dogmatically to assert<sup>1</sup> that, by the principles of the Revolution, the people of England have acquired three fundamental rights, all which, with him, compose one system, and lie together in one short sentence; namely, that we have acquired a right,

1. "To choose our own governors."
2. "To cashier them for misconduct."
3. "To frame a government for ourselves."

This new, and hitherto unheard-of bill of rights, though made in the name of the whole people, belongs to those gentlemen and their

involving a compact of king and people,

which no one has a right to object to.

Their general principle they state explicitly; and base their reasoning upon it.

Further the Revolution is said to have established three rights.

These rights the people repudiate;

<sup>1</sup> *Discourse on the Love of our Country*, by Dr. Price, p. 34.

as by the compact they must.

Price is thinking of ideas expressed during the Civil War.

For the Revolution doctrine we must go to the Declaration of Right then made;

which does not confirm their claims.

Object of the Bill of Rights.

It binds together royal rights and national liberties.

faction only. The body of the people of England have no share in it. They utterly disclaim it. They will resist the practical assertion of it with their lives and fortunes. They are bound to do so by the laws of their country, made at the time of that very Revolution which is appealed to in favour of the fictitious rights claimed by the Society which abuses its name.

23. These gentlemen of the Old Jewry, in all their reasonings on the Revolution of 1688, have a Revolution which happened in England about forty years before, and the late French Revolution, so much before their eyes and in their hearts, that they are constantly confounding all the three together. It is necessary that we should separate what they confound. We must recall their erring fancies to the acts of the Revolution which we revere, for the discovery of its true *principles*. If the principles of the Revolution of 1688 are anywhere to be found, it is in the statute called the *Declaration of Right*. In that most wise, sober, and considerate declaration, drawn up by great lawyers and great statesmen, and not by warm and inexperienced enthusiasts, not one word is said, nor one suggestion made, of a general right "to choose our own governors; to cashier them for misconduct; and to form a government for ourselves."
24. This Declaration of Right (the act of the 1st of William and Mary, sess. 2, ch. 2) is the corner stone of our constitution, as reinforced, explained, improved, and in its fundamental principles for ever settled. It is called "An Act for declaring the rights and liberties of the subject, and for settling the succession of the crown." You will observe that these rights and this succession are

declared in one body, and bound indissolubly together.

25. A few years after this period, a second opportunity offered for asserting a right of election to the crown. On the prospect of a total failure of issue from King William, and from the Princess, afterwards Queen Anne, the consideration of the settlement of the crown, and of a further security for the liberties of the people, again came before the legislature. Did they this second time make any provision for legalising the crown on the spurious revolution principles of the Old Jewry? No. They followed the principles which prevailed in the Declaration of Right; indicating with more precision the persons who were to inherit in the Protestant line. This act also incorporated, by the same policy, our liberties, and a hereditary succession in the same act. Instead of a right to choose our own governors, they declared that the *succession* in that line (the Protestant line drawn from James the First) was absolutely necessary "for the peace, quiet, and security of the realm," and that it was equally urgent on them "to maintain a *certainty in the succession* thereof, to which the subjects may safely have recourse for their protection." Both these acts, in which are heard the unerring, unambiguous oracles of Revolution policy, instead of countenancing the delusive, gipsy predictions of a "right to choose our governors," prove to a demonstration how totally adverse the wisdom of the nation was from turning a case of necessity into a rule of law.

26. Unquestionably there was at the Revolution, in the person of King William, a small and a temporary deviation from the strict order of a regular hereditary succession; but it is against all genuine principles of jurisprudence to draw a principle from a law

A subsequent enactment.

The same principles reasserted.

The need of certainty emphasized.

These two acts show that the regular order was departed from only under urgent necessity.

The case of William very exceptional.

Special cases  
are not preced-  
ents.

Regard shown  
for strict success-  
ion.

What was  
done was the  
only peaceful  
solution.

The language  
of the Bill of  
Rights is designed  
to conceal the  
temporary devia-  
tion.

- made in a special case, and regarding an individual person. *Privilegium non transit in exemplum*. If ever there was a time favourable for establishing the principle, that a king of popular choice was the only legal king, without all doubt it was at the Revolution. Its not being done at that time is a proof that the nation was of opinion it ought not to be done at any time. There is no person so
- 10 completely ignorant of our history as not to know that the majority in parliament of both parties were so little disposed to anything resembling that principle, that at first they were determined to place the vacant crown, not on the head of the Prince of Orange, but on that of his wife Mary, daughter of King James, the eldest born of the issue of that king, which they acknowledged as undoubtedly his. It would be to repeat a very trite story,
- 20 to recall to your memory all those circumstances which demonstrated that their accepting King William was not properly a *choice*; but to all those who did not wish, in effect, to recall King James, or to deluge their country in blood, and again to bring their religion, laws, and liberties into the peril they had just escaped, it was an act of *necessity*, in the strictest moral sense in which necessity can be taken.
- 30 27. In the very act, in which for a time, and in a single case, parliament departed from the strict order of inheritance, in favour of a prince, who, though not next, was however very near, in the line of succession, it is curious to observe how Lord Somers, who drew the bill called the Declaration of Right, has comported himself on that delicate occasion. It is curious to observe with what address this temporary solution of continuity is kept from
- 40 the eye; whilst all that could be found in this act of necessity to countenance the idea of a

hereditary succession is brought forward, and fostered, and made the most of, by this great man, and by the legislature who followed him. Quitting the dry, imperative style of an act of parliament, he makes the Lords and Commons fall to a pious, legislative ejaculation, and declare that they consider it "as a marvellous providence, and merciful goodness of God to this nation, to preserve their said Majesties' royal persons, most happily to reign over us *on the throne of their ancestors*, for which, from the bottom of their hearts, they return their humblest thanks and praises."—The legislature plainly had in view the act of recognition of the first of Queen Elizabeth, chap. 3rd, and of that of James the First, chap. 1st, both acts strongly declaratory of the inheritable nature of the crown, and in many parts they follow, with a nearly literal precision, the words and even the form of thanksgiving which is found in these old declaratory statutes.

28. The two Houses, in the act of King William, did not thank God that they had found a fair opportunity to assert a right to choose their own governors, much less to make an election the *only lawful* title to the crown. Their having been in a condition to avoid the very appearance of it, as much as possible, was by them considered as a providential escape. They threw a politic, well-wrought veil over every circumstance tending to weaken the rights, which in the meliorated order of succession they meant to perpetuate; or which might furnish a precedent for any future departure from what they had then settled for ever. Accordingly, that they might not relax the nerves of their monarchy, and that they might preserve a close conformity to the practice of their ancestors, as it appeared in the declaratory statutes of Queen Mary<sup>1</sup> and Queen

10 William's  
royal descent  
recalled.

20 Inheritance  
emphasized as  
in previous Acts  
of Recognition.

30 The points  
repeated.

Conceal-  
ment of what  
might weaken  
the principle of  
Succession.

<sup>1</sup>1st Mary, sess. 3, ch. 1.

Language of  
more ancient  
statutes repeated.

The prevention  
of any rival  
claims.

Another re-  
statement, show-  
ing that election  
is quite excluded.

Pledge of per-  
manent submis-  
sion and support,

and of Protes-  
tantism.

Elizabeth, in the next clause they vest, by recognition, in their Majesties, *all* the legal prerogatives of the crown, declaring "that in them they are most *fully*, rightfully, and *entirely* invested, incorporated, united, and annexed." In the clause which follows, for preventing questions, by reason of any pretended titles to the crown, they declare (observing also in this the traditional language, along

10 with the traditional policy of the nation, and repeating as from a rubric the language of the preceding acts of Elizabeth and James) that on the preserving "*a certainty* in the SUCCESSION thereof, the unity, peace, and tranquillity of this nation doth, under God, wholly depend."

29. They knew that a doubtful title of succession would but too much resemble an election; and that an election would be utterly destructive of the "unity, peace, and tranquillity of this nation," which they thought to be considerations of some moment. To provide for these objects, and therefore to exclude for ever the Old Jewry doctrine of "a right to choose our own governors," they follow with a clause containing a most solemn pledge, taken from the preceding act of Queen Elizabeth, as solemn a pledge as ever was or can be given in favour of a hereditary succession, and as solemn a renunciation as could be made of the principles by this Society imputed to them. "The Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons, do, in the name of all the people aforesaid, most humbly and faithfully submit *themselves, their heirs and posterities for ever;* and do faithfully promise that they will stand to, maintain, and defend their said Majesties, and also the *limitation of the Crown*, herein specified and contained, to the utmost of their powers," etc.

40 \* 30. So far is it from being true that we acquired a right by the Revolution to elect our

kings, that if we had possessed it before, the English nation did at that time most solemnly renounce and abdicate it, for themselves, and for all their posterity for ever. These gentlemen may value themselves as much as they please on their Whig principles; but I never desire to be thought a better Whig than Lord Somers; or to understand the principles of the Revolution better than those by whom it was brought about; or to read in the Declaration of Right any mysteries unknown to those whose penetrating style has engraved in our ordinances, and in our hearts, the words and spirit of that immortal law.

31. It is true that, aided with the powers derived from force and opportunity, the nation was at that time, in some sense, free to take what course it pleased for filling the throne; but only free to do so upon the same grounds on which they might have wholly abolished 20 their monarchy, and every other part of their constitution. However, they did not think such bold changes within their commission. It is indeed difficult, perhaps impossible, to give limits to the mere *abstract* competence of the supreme power, such as was exercised by parliament at that time; but the limits of a *moral* competence, subjecting, even in powers more indisputably sovereign, occasional will to permanent reason, and to the steady 30 maxims of faith, justice, and fixed fundamental policy, are perfectly intelligible, and perfectly binding upon those who exercise any authority, under any name, or under any title, in the state. The House of Lords, for instance, is not morally competent to dissolve the House of Commons; no, nor even to dissolve itself, nor to abdicate, if it would, its portion in the legislature of the kingdom. Though a king may abdicate for his own person, he cannot abdicate for 40 the monarchy. By as strong, or by a stronger

If right of election existed it was at the Revolution renounced and abandoned.

Such is the plain meaning of the great statute.

There was indeed freedom to do anything in which force could have succeeded. But no such freedom was asserted.

Abstract right is undefinable,

but moral right and duty are clear.

Limitations of the rights of lords, and King, and commons.

The Constitution is a mutual and binding compact.

The parts are under obligations as much as the whole.

Right and might are separate.

Common law was succeeded by statute law, both being equally valid. They bind King and people.

Change in an emergency is not precluded by a fixed rule.

But it must be made only in the erring part and without general derangement.

- reason, the House of Commons cannot renounce its share of authority. The engagement and pact of society, which generally goes by the name of the constitution, forbids such invasion and such surrender. The constituent parts of a state are obliged to hold their public faith with each other, and with all those who derive any serious interest under their engagements, as much as the whole state is bound to
- 10 keep its faith with separate communities. Otherwise competence and power would soon be confounded, and no law be left but the will of a prevailing force. On this principle the succession of the crown has always been what it now is, a hereditary succession by law: in the old line it was a succession by the common law; in the new by the statute law, operating on the principles of the common law, not changing the substance, but regulating the mode, and describing the persons. Both these descriptions of law are of the same force, and are derived from an equal authority, emanating from the common agreement and original compact of the state, *communi sponsione reipublicæ*, and as such are equally binding on king and people too, as long as the terms are observed, and they continue the same body politic.
32. It is far from impossible to reconcile, if we do not suffer ourselves to be entangled in the mazes of metaphysic sophistry, the use both of a fixed rule and an occasional deviation; the sacredness of a hereditary principle of succession in our government, with a power of change in its application in cases of extreme emergency. Even in that extremity (if we take the measure of our rights by our exercise of them at the Revolution), the change is to be confined to the peccant part only; to the part which produced the necessary deviation; and even then it is to be effected without a decomposition of the whole
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- 40

civil and political mass, for the purpose of originating a new civil order out of the first elements of society.

33. A state without the means of some change is without the means of its conversation. Without such means it might even risk the loss of that part of the constitution which it wished the most religiously to preserve. The two principles of conservation and correction operated strongly at the two critical periods of the Restoration and Revolution, when England found itself without a king. At both those periods the nation had lost the bond of union in their ancient edifice; they did not, however, dissolve the whole fabric. On the contrary, in both cases they regenerated the deficient part of the old constitution through the parts which were not impaired. They kept these old parts exactly as they were, that the part recovered might be suited to them. They acted by the ancient organised states in the shape of their old organisation, and not by the organic *molecular* of a disbanded people. At no time, perhaps, did the sovereign legislature manifest a more tender regard to that fundamental principle of British constitutional policy than at the time of the Revolution, when it deviated from the direct line of hereditary succession. The crown was carried somewhat out of the line in which it had before moved; but the new line was derived from the same stock. It was still a line of hereditary descent; still a hereditary descent in the same blood, though a hereditary descent qualified with Protestantism. When the legislature altered the direction, but kept the principle, they showed that they held it inviolable.

34. On this principle, the law of inheritance had admitted some amendment in the old time, and long before the era of the Revolution. Some time after the conquest great

Absolute fixity  
is dangerous.

Correction is  
a necessary  
second principle.

In 1660 and  
1688 the old  
estates combined  
to restore the  
regular constitu-  
tion.

There was no  
recourse to other  
institutions or  
combinations.

The crown  
was restored on  
the hereditary  
basis.

Variations ex-  
isted long ago.

Two methods  
of succession.

In all forms  
the principle of  
inheritance re-  
mains.

Price magni-  
fies the deviation  
as if it were the  
law.

Their theories  
unsettle every-  
thing.

The best laws  
become invalid.

questions arose upon the legal principles of hereditary descent. It became a matter of doubt, whether the heir *per capita* or the heir *per stripes* was to succeed; but whether the heir *per capita* gave way when the heirdom *per stripes* took place, or the Catholic heir when the Protestant was preferred, the inheritable principle survived with a sort of immortality through all transmigrations—*multosque per*

*10 annos stat fortuna domus, et avi numerantur avorum.* This is the spirit of our constitution, not only in its settled course, but in all its revolutions. Whoever came in, or however he came in, whether he obtained the crown by law or by force, the hereditary succession was either continued or adopted.

35. The gentlemen of the Society for Revolutions see nothing in that of 1688 but the deviation from the constitution; and they take 20 the deviation from the principle for the principle. They have little regard to the obvious consequences of their doctrine, though they must see that it leaves positive authority in very few of the positive institutions of this country. When such an unwarrantable maxim is once established, that no throne is lawful but the elective, no one act of the princes who preceded this era of fictitious election can be valid. Do these theorists mean to imitate some 30 of their predecessors, who dragged the bodies of our ancient sovereigns out of the quiet of their tombs? Do they mean to attaint and disable backwards all the kings that have reigned before the Revolution, and consequently to stain the throne of England with the blot of a continual usurpation? Do they mean to invalidate, annul, or to call into question, together with the titles of the whole line of our kings, that great body of our statute law which passed under those whom they treat as 40 usurpers? to annul laws of inestimable value to

our liberties—of as great value at least as any which have passed at or since the period of the Revolution? If kings, who did not owe their crown to the choice of their people, had no title to make laws, what will become of the statute *de tallagio non concedendo?*—of the *petition of right?*—of the act of *habeas corpus?* Do these new doctors of the rights of men presume to assert that King James the Second, who came to the crown as next of blood, according to the rules of a then unqualified succession, was not to all intents and purposes a lawful king of England, before he had done any of those acts which were justly construed into an abdication of his crown? If he was not, much trouble in parliament might have been saved at the period these gentlemen commemorate. But King James was a bad king with a good title, and not a usurper. The princes who succeeded according to the act of parliament which settled the crown on the Electress Sophia and on her descendants, being Protestants, came in as much by a title of inheritance as King James did. He came in according to the law, as it stood at his accession to the crown; and the princes of the House of Brunswick came to the inheritance of the crown, not by election, but by the law, as it stood at their several accessions of Protestant descent and inheritance, as I hope I have shown sufficiently.

36. The law by which this royal family is specifically destined to the succession, is the act of the 12th and 13th of King William. The terms of this act bind "us and our *heirs*, and our *posterity*, to them, their *heirs*, and their *posterity*," being Protestants, to the end of time, in the same words as the Declaration of Right had bound us to the heirs of King William and Queen Mary. It therefore secures both a hereditary crown and a hereditary allegiance. On

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But Kings both before and after the Revolution succeeded according to law.

James' title was undisputed.

The laws of 1689 and 1701 did not change the principle of inheritance.

The Act of Settlement.

Its double requirement,

according to which a foreign princess was named.

She was chosen not for merit but to perpetuate the old and protestant succession.

Terms of the statute.

The limitation connected her with past history,

and secured national unity.

what ground, except the constitutional policy of forming an establishment to secure that kind of succession which is to preclude a choice of the people for ever, could the legislature have fastidiously rejected the fair and abundant choice which our country presented to them, and searched in strange lands for a foreign princess, from whose womb the line of our future rulers were to derive their title to govern millions of men through a series of ages?

37. The Princess Sophia was named in the act of settlement of the 12th and 13th of King William, for a *stock* and root of *inheritance* to our kings, and not for her merits as a temporary administratrix of a power which she might not, and in fact did not, herself ever exercise. She was adopted for one reason, and for one only, because, says the act, "the most excellent Princess Sophia, Electress and Duchess Dowager of Hanover, is *daughter* of the most excellent Princess Elizabeth, late Queen of Bohemia, *daughter* of our late *sovereign lord* King James the First, of happy memory, and is hereby declared to be the next in *succession* in the Protestant line," etc. etc.; "and the crown shall continue to the *heirs* of her body, being Protestants." This limitation was made by parliament, that through the Princess Sophia an inheritable line not only was to be continued in future, but (what they thought very material) that through her it was to be connected with the old stock of inheritance in King James the First; in order that the monarchy might preserve an unbroken unity through all ages, and might be preserved (with safety to our religion) in the old approved mode by descent, in which, if our liberties had been once endangered, they had often, through all storms and struggles of prerogative and privilege, been preserved. They did well. No experience has taught us that in

any other course or method than that of a *hereditary crown* our liberties can be regularly perpetuated and preserved sacred as our *hereditary right*. An irregular, convulsive movement may be necessary to throw off an irregular, convulsive disease. But the course of succession is the healthy habit of the British constitution. Was it that the legislature wanted, at the act for the limitation of the crown in the Hanoverian line, drawn through the female descendants of James the First, a due sense of the inconveniences of having two or three, or possibly more, foreigners in succession to the British throne? No!— they had a due sense of the evils which might happen from such foreign rule, and more than a due sense of them. But a more decisive proof cannot be given of the full conviction of the British nation, that the principles of the Revolution did not authorise them to elect kings at their pleasure, and without any attention to the ancient fundamental principles of our government, than their continuing to adopt a plan of hereditary Protestant succession in the old line, with all the dangers and all the inconveniences of its being a foreign line full before their eyes, and operating with the utmost force upon their minds.

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Traditional rights were thus secured;

and for them inconveniences were faced.

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This fully disproves the new theory of election.

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These things were once known to all.

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38. A few years ago I should be ashamed to overload a matter, so capable of supporting itself, by the then unnecessary support of any argument; but this seditious, unconstitutional doctrine is now publicly taught, avowed, and printed. The dislike I feel to revolutions, the signals for which have so often been given from pulpits; the spirit of change that is gone abroad; the total contempt which prevails with you, and may come to prevail with us, of all ancient institutions, when set in opposition to a present sense of convenience, or to the bent of a present inclination: all these considerations

Now it is necessary to re-state them,

lest we be deceived.

Our people love their constitution,

as the guarantee of continued stability.

Our sophistical opponents pretend that we hold the theory of "divine right."

make it not unadvisable, in my opinion, to call back our attention to the true principles of our own domestic laws ; that you, my French friend, should begin to know, and that we should continue to cherish them. We ought not, on either side of the water, to suffer ourselves to be imposed upon by the counterfeit wares which some persons, by a double fraud, export to you in illicit bottoms, as raw commodities of British growth, though wholly alien to our soil, in order afterwards to smuggle them back again into this country, manufactured after the newest Paris fashion of an improved liberty.

39. The people of England will not ape the fashions they have never tried, nor go back to those which they have found mischievous on trial. They look upon the legal hereditary succession of their crown as among their rights, not as among their wrongs ; as a benefit, not 20 as a grievance ; as a security for their liberty, not as a badge of servitude. They look on the frame of their commonwealth, *such as it stands*, to be of inestimable value ; and they conceive the undisturbed succession of the crown to be a pledge of the stability and perpetuity of all the other members of our constitution.

40. I shall beg leave, before I go any further, to take notice of some paltry artifices which the abettors of election, as the only lawful title 30 to the crown, are ready to employ, in order to render the support of the just principles of our constitution a task somewhat invidious. These sophisters substitute a fictitious cause, and feigned personages, in whose favour they suppose you engaged, whenever you defend the inheritable nature of the crown. It is common with them to dispute as if they were in a conflict with some of those exploded fanatics of slavery, who formerly maintained, what I believe no creature now maintains, "that the

crown is held by divine hereditary and indefeasible right."—These old fanatics of single arbitrary power dogmatised as if hereditary royalty was the only lawful government in the world, just as our new fanatics of popular arbitrary power maintain that a popular election is the sole lawful source of authority. The old prerogative enthusiasts, it is true, did speculate foolishly, and perhaps impiously too, as if monarchy had more of a divine sanction than any other mode of government; and as if a right to govern by inheritance were in strictness *indefeasible*, in every person, who should be found in the succession to a throne, and under every circumstance, which no civil or political right can be. But an absurd opinion concerning the king's hereditary right to the crown does not prejudice one that is rational, and bottomed upon solid principles of law and policy. If all the absurd theories of lawyers and divines were 20 to vitiate the objects in which they are conversant, we should have no law and no religion left in the world. But an absurd theory on one side of a question forms no justification for alleging a false fact, or promulgating mischievous maxims, on the other.

41. The second claim of the Revolution Society is "a right of cashiering their governors for *misconduct*." Perhaps the apprehensions our ancestors entertained of forming such a precedent as that "of cashiering for misconduct," was the cause that the declaration of the act, which implied the abdication of King James, was, if it had any fault, rather too guarded, and too circumstantial.<sup>1</sup> But all this guard, and all this accumulation of circumstances, serves to 30

That was another extreme.

Our opinion rests on law and reason, and is not vitiated by the errors of others.

Second principle of the Revolution : the right to cashier.

<sup>1</sup> "That King James the Second, having endeavoured to subvert the constitution of the kingdom by breaking the original contract between king and people, and, by the advice of Jesuits, and other wicked persons, having violated the fundamental laws, and having withdrawn himself out of the kingdom, hath abdicated the government, and the throne is thereby vacant."

This claim is also carefully guarded against.

The charge against James was very grave,

including breach of the original contract.

They acted under necessity and sought to make a recurrence impossible.

The Bill of Rights and subsequent measures secured the responsibility of ministers and parliamentary control.

show the spirit of caution which predominated in the national councils in a situation in which men irritated by oppression, and elevated by a triumph over it, are apt to abandon themselves to violent and extreme courses: it shows the anxiety of the great men who influenced the conduct of affairs at that great event to make the Revolution a parent of settlement, and not a nursery of future revolutions.

- 10      42. No government could stand a moment, if it could be blown down with anything so loose and indefinite as an opinion of "*misconduct*." They who led at the Revolution grounded the virtual abdication of King James upon no such light and uncertain principle. They charged him with nothing else than a design, confirmed by a multitude of illegal overt acts, to *subvert the Protestant church and state*, and their *fundamental*, unquestionable laws and liberties: they charged him with having broken the *original contract* between king and people. This was more than *misconduct*. A grave and overruling necessity obliged them to take the step they took, and took with infinite reluctance, as under that most rigorous of all laws. Their trust for the future preservation of the constitution was not in future revolutions. The grand policy of all their regulations was to render it almost impracticable
- 20      for any future sovereign to compel the states of the kingdom to have again recourse to those violent remedies. They left the crown what, in the eye and estimation of law, it had ever been, perfectly irresponsible. In order to lighten the crown still further, they aggravated responsibility on ministers of state. By the statute of the 1st of king William, sess. 2nd, called "*the act for declaring the rights and liberties of the subject, and for settling the succession to the crown*," they enacted that the ministers should
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serve the crown on the terms of that declaration. They secured soon after the frequent meetings of parliament, by which the whole government would be under the constant inspection and active control of the popular representative and of the magnates of the kingdom. In the next great constitutional act, that of the 12th and 13th of King William, for the further limitation of the crown, and better securing the rights and liberties of the subject, 10 they provided "that no pardon under the great seal of England should be pleadable to an impeachment by the Commons in parliament." The rule laid down for government in the Declaration of Right, the constant inspection of parliament, the practical claim of impeachment, they thought infinitely a better security not only for their constitutional liberty, but against the vices of administration, than the reservation of a right so difficult in the practice, 20 so uncertain in the issue, and often so mischievous in the consequences, as that of "cashiering their governors."

43. Dr. Price, in his sermon,<sup>1</sup> condemns very properly the practice of gross, adulatory addresses to kings. Instead of this fulsome style, he proposes that his Majesty should be told, on occasions of congratulation, that "he is to consider himself as more properly the servant than the sovereign of his people." For 30 a compliment, this new form of address does not seem to be very soothing. Those who are servants in name, as well as in effect, do not like to be told of their situation, their duty, and their obligations. The slave, in the old play, tells his master, "*Hæc commemoratione est quasi exprobatio.*" It is not pleasant as compliment; it is not wholesome as instruction. After all, if the king were to bring himself to echo this new kind of address, to adopt it in terms, and 40

These they reckoned the best securities of freedom and good government.

Price proposes to style the king servant.

Such titles are neither benevolent

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 22-24.

nor effective  
for their purpose.

No doubt 'cashiering' is intended.

The king is a servant in that he promotes the national good;

but he is servant of no man or men,

and by law he is sovereign lord.

even to take the appellation of Servant of the People as his royal style, how either he or we should be much mended by it, I cannot imagine. I have seen very assuming letters, signed, Your most obedient, humble servant. The proudest domination that ever was endured on earth took a title of still greater humility than that which is now proposed for sovereigns by the Apostle of Liberty. Kings and nations

10 were trampled upon by the foot of one calling himself "the Servant of Servants;" and mandates for deposing sovereigns were sealed with the signet of "the Fisherman."

44. I should have considered all this as no more than a sort of flippant, vain discourse, in which, as in an unsavoury fume, several persons suffer the spirit of liberty to evaporate, if it were not plainly in support of the idea, and a part of the scheme, of "cashiering kings for misconduct." In that light it is worth some observation.

45. Kings, in one sense, are undoubtedly the servants of the people, because their power has no other rational end than that of the general advantage; but it is not true that they are, in the ordinary sense (by our constitution at least), anything like servants; the essence of whose situation is to obey the commands of some other, and to be removable at pleasure. But

30 the king of Great Britain obeys no other person; all other persons are individually, and collectively too, under him, and owe to him a legal obedience. The law, which knows neither to flatter nor to insult, calls this high magistrate, not our servant, as this humble divine calls him, but "*our sovereign Lord the King;*" and we, on our parts, have learned to speak only the primitive language of the law, and not the confused jargon of their Babylonian pulpits.

46. As he is not to obey us, but as we are to obey the law in him, our constitution has made no sort of provision towards rendering him, as a servant, in any degree responsible. Our constitution knows nothing of a magistrate like the *Justicia* of Arragon ; nor of any court legally appointed, nor of any process legally settled, for submitting the king to the responsibility belonging to all servants. In this he is not distinguished from the Commons and the Lords, who, in their several public capacities, can never be called to an account for their conduct ; although the Revolution Society chooses to assert, in direct opposition to one of the wisest and most beautiful parts of our constitution, that “a king is no more than the first servant of the public, created by it, *and responsible to it.*”

47. Ill would our ancestors at the Revolution have deserved their fame for wisdom, if they had found no security for their freedom, but in rendering their government feeble in its operations and precarious in its tenure ; if they had been able to contrive no better remedy against arbitrary power than civil confusion. Let these gentlemen state who that *representative* public is to whom they will affirm the king, as a servant, to be responsible. It will be then time enough for me to produce to them the positive statute law which affirms 30 that he is not.

48. The ceremony of cashiering kings, of which these gentlemen talk so much at their ease, can rarely, if ever, be performed without force. It then becomes a case of war, and not of constitution. Laws are commanded to hold their tongues amongst arms ; and tribunals fall to the ground with the peace they are no longer able to uphold. The Revolution of 1688 was obtained by a just war, in the only 40

He is not responsible:

10 nor are the other estates.

To whom is he responsible ? a challenge.

An express statute.

Cashiering is a question of force.

It is outside law.

When it is necessary and how it is to be done the wise alone can judge.

Times and cases differ.

It should be the last resort.

The third principle or claim: to form our own mode of government.

case in which any war, and much more a civil war, can be just. "Justa bella quibus *necessaria*." The question of dethroning, or, if these gentlemen like the phrase better, "cashing kings," will always be, as it has

always been, an extraordinary question of state, and wholly out of the law; a question (like all other questions of state) of dispositions, and of means, and of probable consequences, rather than of positive rights. As it was not made for common abuses, so it is not to be agitated by common minds. The speculative line of demarcation, where obedience ought to end, and resistance must begin, is faint, obscure, and not easily definable. It is not a single act, or a single event, which determines it. Governments must be abused and deranged indeed, before it can be thought of; and the prospect of the future must be as

bad as the experience of the past. When things are in that lamentable condition, the nature of the disease is to indicate the remedy to those whom nature has qualified to administer in extremities this critical, ambiguous, bitter potion to a distempered state. Times, and occasions, and provocations will teach their own lessons. The wise will determine from the gravity of the case; the irritable, from sensibility to oppression; the high-minded,

from disdain and indignation at abusive power in unworthy hands; the brave and bold, from the love of honourable danger in a generous cause: but, with or without right, a revolution will be the very last resource of the thinking and the good.

49. The third head of right, asserted by the pulpit of the Old Jewry, namely, the "right to form a government for ourselves," has, at least, as little countenance from anything done at the Revolution, either in precedent or principle, as the two first of their claims.

The Revolution was made to preserve our *ancient*, indisputable laws and liberties, and that *ancient* constitution of government which is our only security for law and liberty. If you are desirous of knowing the spirit of our constitution, and the policy which predominated in that great period which has secured it to this hour, pray look for both in our histories, in our records, in our acts of parliament, and journals of parliament, and not in the sermons 10 of the Old Jewry, and the after-dinner toasts of the Revolution Society. In the former you will find other ideas and another language. Such a claim is as ill-suited to our temper and wishes as it is unsupported by any appearance of authority. The very idea of the fabrication of a new government is enough to fill us with disgust and horror. We wished at the period of the Revolution, and do now wish, to derive all we possess as *an inheritance from our fore-fathers*. Upon that body and stock of inheritance we have taken care not to inoculate any scion alien to the nature of the original plant. All the reformations we have hitherto made have proceeded upon the principle of reverence to antiquity; and I hope, nay I am persuaded, that all those which possibly may be made hereafter, will be carefully formed upon analogical precedent, authority, and example.

50. Our oldest reformation is that of 30 Magna Charta. You will see that Sir Edward Coke, that great oracle of our law, and indeed all the great men who follow him, to Blackstone,<sup>1</sup> are industrious to prove the pedigree of our liberties. They endeavour to prove that the ancient charter, the Magna Charta of King John, was connected with another positive charter from Henry I., and that both the one and the other were nothing more than a

Let the records be examined.

The Revolution preserved ancient laws as an inheritance.

Nothing alien has as yet been grafted on them.

The case of Magna Charta.

It is a renewal of another written law; and both affirm more ancient unwritten law.

<sup>1</sup> See Blackstone's *Magna Charta*, printed at Oxford, 1759.

At least our legislators thought so.

The Petition of Right 1628 asserted the inheritance of liberties.

Positive titles were claimed, and not speculative disputable rights.

So in 1689.

re-affirmance of the still more ancient standing law of the kingdom. In the matter of fact, for the greater part, these authors appear to be in the right; perhaps not always; but if the lawyers mistake in some particulars, it proves my position still the more strongly; because it demonstrates the powerful prepossession towards antiquity with which the minds of all our lawyers and legislators, and of all the people whom they wish to influence, have been always filled; and the stationary policy of this kingdom in considering their most sacred rights and franchises as an *inheritance*.

51. In the famous law of the 3rd of Charles I., called the *Petition of Right*, the parliament says to the king, "Your subjects have *inherited* this freedom," claiming their franchises not on abstract principles "as the rights of men," but as the rights of Englishmen, and as a patrimony derived from their forefathers. Selden, and the other profoundly learned men, who drew this Petition of Right, were as well acquainted, at least, with all the general theories concerning the "rights of men," as any of the discoursers in our pulpits, or on your tribune; full as well as Dr. Price, or as the Abbé Sieyes. But, for reasons worthy of that practical wisdom which superseded their theoretic science, they preferred this positive, recorded, *hereditary* title to all which can be dear to the man and the citizen, to that vague speculative right, which exposed their sure inheritance to be scrambled for and torn to pieces by every wild, litigious spirit.

52. The same policy pervades all the laws which have since been made for the preservation of our liberties. In the 1st of William and Mary, in the famous statute called the Declaration of Right, the two Houses utter not a syllable of "a right to frame a government

for themselves." You will see that their whole care was to secure the religion, laws, and liberties that had been long possessed, and had been lately endangered. "Taking<sup>1</sup> into their most serious consideration the *best* means for making such an establishment, that their religion, laws, and liberties might not be in danger of being again subverted," they auspicate all their proceedings, by stating as some of those best means, "in the first place" to do "as their ancestors in like cases have usually done for vindicating their *ancient* rights and liberties, to declare;"—and then they pray the king and queen, "that it may be declared and enacted, that *all and singular* the rights and liberties asserted and declared are the true *ancient* and indubitable rights and liberties of the people of this kingdom."

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53. You will observe that from Magna Charta to the Declaration of Right, it has been the uniform policy of our constitution to claim and assert our liberties as an *entailed inheritance* derived to us from our forefathers, and to be transmitted to our posterity; as an estate specially belonging to the people of this kingdom, without any reference whatever to any other more general or prior right. By this means our constitution preserves a unity in so great a diversity of its parts. We have an inheritable crown; an inheritable peerage; and a House 20 of Commons and a people inheriting privileges, franchises, and liberties, from a long line of ancestors.

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All is declared  
to be ancient  
rights and liber-  
ties derived from  
ancestors.

Comparison of  
the Constitution to  
an entailed estate.

Possessing unity  
in diversity of  
parts.

54. This policy appears to me to be the result of profound reflection; or rather the happy effect of following nature, which is wisdom without reflection, and above it. A spirit of innovation is generally the result of a selfish temper, and confined views. People will not

This is accord-  
ing to Nature.

Innovation on the other hand is due to selfishness and narrowness.

Inheritance admits improvement.

It holds what it gains.

Institutions are handed down like property and like lives.

Mankind ever changing, and ever renewed preserves a stable permanence: and so our Constitution and the conduct of the state.

Thus we follow the analogy of Nature.

look forward to posterity, who never look backward to their ancestors. Besides, the people of England well know that the idea of inheritance furnishes a sure principle of conservation, and a sure principle of transmission; without at all excluding a principle of improvement. It leaves acquisition free; but it secures what it acquires. Whatever advantages are obtained by a state proceeding on these maxims, are locked fast as in a sort of family settlement; grasped as in a kind of mortmain for ever. By a constitutional policy, working after the pattern of nature, we receive, we hold, we transmit our government and our privileges, in the same manner in which we enjoy and transmit our property and our lives. The institutions of policy, the goods of fortune, the gifts of providence, are handed down to us, and from us, in the same course and order. Our political system is placed in a just correspondence and symmetry with the order of the world, and with the mode of existence decreed to a permanent body composed of transitory parts; wherein, by the disposition of a stupendous wisdom, moulding together the great mysterious incorporation of the human race, the whole, at one time, is never old, or middle-aged, or young, but, in a condition of unchangeable constancy, moves on through the varied tenor of perpetual decay, fall, renovation, and progression. Thus, by preserving the method of nature in the conduct of the state, in what we improve, we are never wholly new; in what we retain, we are never wholly obsolete. By adhering in this manner and on those principles to our forefathers, we are guided not by the superstition of antiquarians, but by the spirit of philosophic analogy. In this choice of inheritance we have given to our frame of polity the image of a relation in blood; binding up the constitution of our country with our

dearest domestic ties ; adopting our fundamental laws into the bosom of our family affections ; keeping inseparable, and cherishing with the warmth of all their combined and mutually reflected charities, our state, our hearths, our sepulchres, and our altars.

55. Through the same plan of a conformity to nature in our artificial institutions, and by calling in the aid of her unerring and powerful instincts, to fortify the fallible and feeble contrivances of our reason, we have derived several other, and those no small benefits, from considering our liberties in the light of an inheritance. Always acting as if in the presence of canonised forefathers, the spirit of freedom, leading in itself to misrule and excess, is tempered with an awful gravity. This idea of a liberal descent inspires us with a sense of habitual native dignity, which prevents that upstart insolence almost inevitably adhering to and disgracing those who are the first acquirers of any distinction. By this means our liberty becomes a noble freedom. It carries an imposing and majestic aspect. It has a pedigree and illustrating ancestors. It has its bearings and its ensigns armorial. It has its gallery of portraits ; its monumental inscriptions ; its records, evidences, and titles. We procure reverence to our civil institutions on the principle upon which nature teaches us to revere individual men ; on account of their age, and on account of those from whom they are descended. All your sophisters cannot produce anything better adapted to preserve a rational and manly freedom than the course that we have pursued, who have chosen our nature rather than our speculations, our breasts rather than our inventions, for the great conservatories and magazines of our rights and privileges.

And for our constitution we cherish a family affection.

Other benefits follow.

10 Freedom is controlled.

There is a sense of dignity.

20 Our liberties are venerated from their antiquity and the eminent men who contended for them.

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Thus our freedom is rational and manly, being based on human nature.

France also might have combined freedom with dignity.

She had the elements of a constitution.

The states, kept separate, might have represented all classes and checked each other.

This would have caused full deliberation.

Both liberty and unity would have been secured.

56. You might, if you pleased, have profited of our example, and have given to your recovered freedom a correspondent dignity. Your privileges, though discontinued, were not lost to memory. Your constitution, it is true, whilst you were out of possession, suffered waste and dilapidation; but you possessed in some parts the walls, and, in all, the foundations, of a noble and venerable castle. You

10 might have repaired those walls; you might have built on those old foundations. Your constitution was suspended before it was perfected; but you had the elements of a constitution very nearly as good as could be wished.

In your old states you possessed that variety of parts corresponding with the various descriptions of which your community was happily composed; you had all that combination and all that opposition of interests, you had that action and counteraction, which, in the natural

and in the political world, from the reciprocal struggle of discordant powers, draws out the harmony of the universe. These opposed and conflicting interests, which you considered as so great a blemish in your old and in our present constitution, interpose a salutary check to all precipitate resolutions. They render

deliberation a matter not of choice, but of necessity; they make all change a subject of *compromise*, which naturally begets moderation; they produce *temperaments* preventing the sore

evil of harsh, crude, unqualified reformations; and rendering all the headlong exertions of arbitrary power, in the few or in the many, for ever impracticable. Through that diversity of members and interests, general liberty had as

many securities as there were separate views in the several orders; whilst by pressing down the whole by the weight of a real monarchy, the separate parts would have been prevented from warping, and starting from their allotted places.

57. You had all these advantages in your ancient states ; but you chose to act as if you had never been moulded into civil society, and had everything to begin anew. You began ill, because you began by despising everything that belonged to you. You set up your trade without a capital. If the last generations of your country appeared without much lustre in your eyes, you might have passed them by, and derived your claims from a more early race of 10 ancestors. Under a pious predilection for those ancestors, your imaginations would have realised in them a standard of virtue and wisdom, beyond the vulgar practice of the hour : and you would have risen with the example to whose imitation you aspired. Respecting your forefathers, you would have been taught to respect yourselves. You would not have chosen to consider the French as a people of yesterday, as a nation of low-born servile wretches until 20 the emancipating year of 1789. In order to furnish, at the expense of your honour, an excuse to your apologists here for several enormities of yours, you would not have been content to be represented as a gang of Maroon slaves, suddenly broke loose from the house of bondage, and therefore to be pardoned for your abuse of the liberty to which you were not accustomed, and ill fitted. Would it not, my worthy friend, have been wiser to have you 30 thought, what I, for one, always thought you, a generous and gallant nation, long misled to your disadvantage by your high and romantic sentiments of fidelity, honour, and loyalty ; that events had been unfavourable to you, but that you were not enslaved through any illiberal or servile disposition ; that in your most devoted submission, you were actuated by a principle of public spirit, and that it was your country you worshipped, in the person of your king ? Had 40 you made it to be understood, that in the

You erred in disregarding the past.

You could have gone back to your greatest age.

The folly of talk of emancipation.

You might have claimed an excess of loyalty,

and a desire  
to recover lost  
privileges ;

or might have  
imitated us.

The possibili-  
ties that were.

Conditions of  
national great-  
ness.

The only real  
equality.

Evil effect of  
delusive hopes.

delusion of this amiable error you had gone fur-  
ther than your wise ancestors ; that you were re-  
solved to resume your ancient privileges, whilst  
you preserved the spirit of your ancient and  
your recent loyalty and honour ; or if, diffident  
of yourselves, and not clearly discerning the al-  
most obliterated constitution of your ancestors,  
you had looked to your neighbours in this land,  
who had kept alive the ancient principles and

10 models of the old common law of Europe  
meliorated and adapted to its present state—by  
following wise examples you would have given  
new examples of wisdom to the world. You  
would have rendered the cause of liberty vene-  
rable in the eyes of every worthy mind in every  
nation. You would have shamed despotism  
from the earth, by showing that freedom was  
not only reconcilable, but, as when well dis-  
ciplined it is, auxiliary to law. You would

20 have had an unoppressive but a productive  
revenue. You would have had a flourishing  
commerce to feed it. You would have had a  
free constitution ; a potent monarchy ; a disci-  
plined army ; a reformed and venerated clergy ; a  
mitigated but spirited nobility, to lead your  
virtue, not to overlay it ; you would have had a  
liberal order of commons, to emulate and to  
recruit that nobility ; you would have had a  
protected, satisfied, laborious, and obedient

30 people, taught to seek and to recognise the  
happiness that is to be found by virtue in all  
conditions ; in which consists the true moral  
equality of mankind, and not in that monstrous  
fiction, which, by inspiring false ideas and vain  
expectations into men destined to travel in the  
obscure walk of laborious life, serves only to  
aggravate and embitter that real inequality  
which it never can remove ; and which the  
order of civil life establishes as much for the  
benefit of those whom it must leave in a humble  
state, as those whom it is able to exalt to a

condition more splendid, but not more happy. You had a smooth and easy career of felicity and glory laid open to you, beyond anything recorded in the history of the world; but you have shown that difficulty is good for man.

A proof of the need of opposition.

58. Compute yours gains: see what is got by those extravagant and presumptuous speculations which have taught your leaders to despise all their predecessors, and all their contemporaries, and even to despise themselves, 10 until the moment in which they became truly despicable. By following those false lights, France has bought undisguised calamities at a higher price than any nation has purchased the most unequivocal blessings! France has bought poverty by crime! France has not sacrificed her virtue to her interest, but she has abandoned her interest, that she might prostitute her virtue. All other nations have begun the fabric of a new government, or the 20 reformation of an old, by establishing originally, or by enforcing with greater exactness, some rites or other of religion. All other people have laid the foundations of civil freedom in severer manners, and a system of a more austere and masculine morality. France, when she let loose the reins of regal authority, doubled the licence of a ferocious dissoluteness in manners, and of an insolent irreligion in opinions and practices; and has extended through all ranks 30 of life, as if she were communicating some privilege, or laying open some secluded benefit, all the unhappy corruptions that usually were the disease of wealth and power. This is one of the new principles of equality in France.

Calamity acquired through crime.

Licence in thought and life.

59. France, by the perfidy of her leaders, has utterly disgraced the tone of lenient council in the cabinets of princes, and disarmed it of its most potent topics. She has sanctified the dark, suspicious maxims of tyrannous distrust; 40

Royal clemency discouraged.

New motives  
for distrust and  
despotism.

and taught kings to tremble at (what will hereafter be called) the delusive plausibilities of moral politicians. Sovereigns will consider those who advise them to place an unlimited confidence in their people, as subverters of their thrones ; as traitors who aim at their destruction, by leading their easy good-nature, under specious pretences, to admit combinations of bold and faithless men into a participation of their power. This alone (if there were nothing else) is an irreparable calamity to you and to mankind. Remember that your parliament of Paris told your king that, in calling the states together, he had nothing to fear but the prodigal excess of their zeal in providing for the support of the throne. It is right that these men should hide their heads.

10 It is right that they should bear their part in the ruin which their counsel has brought on 20 their sovereign and their country. Such sanguine declarations tend to lull authority asleep ; to encourage it rashly to engage in perilous adventures of untried policy ; to neglect those provisions, preparations, and precautions which distinguish benevolence from imbecility ; and without which no man can answer for the salutary effect of any abstract plan of government or of freedom. For want of these, they have seen the medicine of the state corrupted into its poison.

30 They have seen the French rebel against a mild and lawful monarch, with more fury, outrage, and insult than ever any people has been known to rise against the most illegal usurper, or the most sanguinary tyrant. Their resistance was made to concession ; their revolt was from protection ; their blow was aimed at a hand holding out graces, favours, and immunities.

Treacherous  
advisers,

preventing pre-  
caution.

Ingratitude  
and violence.

An array of  
consequent evils.

40 60. This was unnatural. The rest is in order. They have found their punishment in their success. Laws overturned ; tribunals subverted ; industry without vigour ; commerce

expiring; the revenue unpaid, yet the people impoverished; a church pillaged, and a state not relieved; civil and military anarchy made the constitution of the kingdom; everything human and divine sacrificed to the idol of public credit, and national bankruptcy the consequence; and, to crown all, the paper securities of new, precarious, tottering power, the discredited paper securities of impoverished fraud and beggared rapine, held out as a currency for the support of an empire, in lieu of the two great recognised species that represent the lasting, conventional credit of mankind, which disappeared and hid themselves in the earth from whence they came, when the principle of property, whose creatures and representatives they are, was systematically subverted.

61. Were all these dreadful things necessary? Were they the inevitable results of the desperate struggle of determined patriots, compelled to wade through blood and tumult, to the quiet shore of a tranquil and prosperous liberty? No! nothing like it. The fresh ruins of France, which shock our feelings wherever we can turn our eyes, are not the devastation of civil war; they are the sad but instructive monuments of rash and ignorant counsel in time of profound peace. They are the display of inconsiderate and presumptuous, because unresisted and irresistible, authority. The persons who have thus squandered away the precious treasure of their crimes, the persons who have made this prodigal and wild waste of public evils (the last stake reserved for the ultimate ransom of the state), have met in their progress with little, or rather with no opposition at all. Their whole march was more like a triumphal procession than the progress of a war. Their pioneers have gone before them, and demolished and laid everything level at their feet. Not one drop of *their* blood have

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Disgraceful  
finance,

and the total  
loss of confidence.

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Due not to  
necessity,

but to igno-  
rant presumption.

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The meddlers  
were unchecked,

the path being  
prepared,

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and have made no sacrifice.

The explanation evident.

The National Assembly incompetent.

Vain imaginations.

Personal capacity is needed.

A set of worthless deputies.

they shed in the cause of the country they have ruined. They have made no sacrifices to their projects of greater consequence than their shoe-buckles, whilst they were imprisoning their king, murdering their fellow-citizens, and bathing in tears, and plunging in poverty and distress, thousands of worthy men and worthy families. Their cruelty has not even been the base result of fear. It has been the effect of

10 their sense of perfect safety, in authorising treasons, robberies, rapes, assassinations, slaughters, and burnings, throughout their harassed land. But the cause of all was plain from the beginning.

62. This unforced choice, this fond election of evil, would appear perfectly unaccountable, if we did not consider the composition of the National Assembly: I do not mean its formal constitution, which, as it now stands, is

20 exceptionable enough, but the materials of which, in a great measure, it is composed, which is of ten thousand times greater consequence than all the formalities in the world. If we were to know nothing of this assembly but by its title and function, no colours could paint to the imagination anything more venerable. In that light the mind of an inquirer, subdued by such an awful image as that of the virtue and wisdom of a whole people collected into a

30 focus, would pause and hesitate in condemning things even of the very worst aspect. Instead of blamable, they would appear only mysterious. But no name, no power, no function, no artificial institution whatsoever, can make the men of whom any system of authority is composed any other than God, and nature, and education, and their habits of life have made them. Capacities beyond these the people have not to give. Virtue and wisdom may be the objects of their choice; but their choice confers neither the one nor the other on those upon

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whom they lay their ordaining hands. They have not the engagement of nature, they have not the promise of revelation, for any such powers.

Election does not make fools wise.

63. After I had read over the list of the persons and descriptions elected into the *Tiers Etat*, nothing which they afterwards did could appear astonishing. Among them, indeed, I saw some of known rank; some of shining talents; but of any practical experience in the state, not one man was to be found. The best were only men of theory. But whatever the distinguished few may have been, it is the substance and mass of the body which constitutes its character, and must finally determine its direction. In all bodies, those who will lead, must also, in a considerable degree, follow. They must conform their propositions to the taste, talent, and disposition of those whom they wish to conduct: therefore, if an assembly is viciously or feebly composed in a very great part of it, nothing but such a supreme degree of virtue as very rarely appears in the world, and for that reason cannot enter into calculation, will prevent the men of talents disseminated through it from becoming only the expert instruments of absurd projects! If, what is the more likely event, instead of that unusual degree of virtue, they should be actuated by sinister ambition, and a lust of meretricious glory, then the feeble part of the assembly, to whom at first they conform, becomes in its turn the dupe and instrument of their designs. In this political traffic, the leaders will be obliged to bow to the ignorance of their followers, and the followers to become subservient to the worst designs of their leaders.

All were inexperienced.

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The few must please the many;

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and if they are ambitious they deceive; and mutual degradation follows.

The whole body should be qualified to judge.

Good breeding necessary.

The numbers fixed for the third estate.

The motive and the consequence.

Capacity doubly necessary.

The great majority are petty lawyers,

64. To secure any degree of sobriety in the propositions made by the leaders in any public assembly, they ought to respect, in some degree perhaps to fear, those whom they conduct. To be led any otherwise than blindly, the followers must be qualified, if not for actors, at least for judges; they must also be judges of natural weight and authority. Nothing can secure a steady and moderate conduct in such assemblies, but that the body of them should be respectably composed, in point of condition in life, of permanent property, of education, and of such habits as enlarge and liberalise the understanding.

65. In the calling of the states-general of France, the first thing which struck me was a great departure from the ancient course. I found the representation for the Third Estate composed of six hundred persons. They were equal in number to the representatives of both the other orders. If the orders were to act separately, the number would not, beyond the consideration of the expense, be of much moment. But when it became apparent that the three orders were to be melted down into one, the policy and necessary effect of this numerous representation became obvious. A very small desertion from either of the other two orders must throw the power of both into the hands of the third. In fact, the whole power of the state was soon resolved into that body. Its due composition became therefore of infinitely the greater importance.

66. Judge, Sir, of my surprise, when I found that a very great proportion of the Assembly (a majority, I believe, of the members who attended) was composed of practitioners in the law. It was composed, not of distinguished magistrates, who had given pledges to their country of their science, prudence, and integrity; not of leading advocates, the glory

of the bar ; not of renowned professors in universities ;—but for the far greater part, as it must in such a number, of the inferior, unlearned, mechanical, merely instrumental members of the profession. There were distinguished exceptions ; but the general composition was of obscure provincial advocates, of stewards of petty local jurisdictions, country attorneys, notaries, and the whole train of the ministers of municipal litigation, the fomenters and conductors of the petty war of village vexation. From the moment I read the list, I saw distinctly, and very nearly as it has happened, all that was to follow.

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67. The degree of estimation in which any profession is held becomes the standard of the estimation in which the professors hold themselves. Whatever the personal merits of many individual lawyers might have been, and in many it was undoubtedly very considerable, in that military kingdom no part of the profession had been much regarded, except the highest of all, who often united to their professional offices great family splendour, and were invested with great power and authority. These certainly were highly respected, and even with no small degree of awe. The next rank was not much esteemed ; the mechanical part was in a very low degree of repute.

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accustomed to little things.

Men without high esteem or self-respect.

68. Whenever the supreme authority is vested in a body so composed, it must evidently produce the consequences of supreme authority placed in the hands of men not taught habitually to respect themselves ; who had no previous fortune in character at stake ; who could not be expected to bear with moderation, or to conduct with discretion, a power which they themselves, more than any others, must be surprised to find in their hands. Who could flatter himself that these men, suddenly,

Unable to exercise moderation :

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- easily elated ; and, as it were, by enchantment, snatched from the humblest rank of subordination, would not be intoxicated with their unprepared greatness? Who could conceive that men who are habitually meddling, daring, subtle, active, of litigious dispositions and unquiet minds, would easily fall back into their old condition of obscure contention, and laborious, low, and unprofitable chicane? Who could doubt but that, at any
- naturally inclined to the litigious. 10 expense to the state, of which they understood nothing, they must pursue their private interests which they understood but too well? It was not an event depending on chance, or contingency. It was inevitable; it was necessary; it was planted in the nature of things. They must *join* (if their capacity did not permit them to *lead*) in any project which could procure to them a *litigious constitution*; which could lay open to them those innumerable
- Jobbery sure to follow. 20 lucrative jobs which follow in the train of all great convulsions and revolutions in the state, and particularly in all great and violent permutations of property. Was it to be expected that they would attend to the stability of property, whose existence had always depended upon whatever rendered property questionable, ambiguous and insecure? Their objects would be enlarged with their elevation, but their disposition and habits, and mode of accomplishing
- Insecurity to them welcome. 30 their designs, must remain the same.
- Other elements. 69. Well! but these men were to be tempered and restrained by other descriptions, of more sober and more enlarged understandings. Were they then to be awed by the super-eminent authority and awful dignity of a handful of country clowns, who have seats in that Assembly, some of whom are said not to be able to read and write? and by not a greater number of traders, who, though somewhat more instructed, and more conspicuous in the order of society, had never known anything beyond their
- Rustics and traders could not counteract them. 40

counting-house? No! both these descriptions were more formed to be overborne and swayed by the intrigues and artifices of lawyers, than to become their counterpoise. With such a dangerous disproportion, the whole must needs be governed by them. To the faculty of law was joined a pretty considerable proportion of the faculty of medicine. This faculty had not, any more than that of the law, possessed in France its just estimation. Its professors, therefore, must have the qualities of men not habituated to sentiments of dignity. But supposing they had ranked as they ought to do, and as with us they do actually, the sides of sick beds are not the academies for forming statesmen and legislators. Then came the dealers in stocks and funds, who must be eager, at any expense, to change their ideal paper wealth for the more solid substance of land. To these were joined men of other descriptions, from whom as little knowledge of, or attention to, the interests of a great state was to be expected, and as little regard to the stability of any institution; men formed to be instruments, not controls. Such in general was the composition of the *Tiers Etat* in the National Assembly; in which was scarcely to be perceived the slightest traces of what we call the natural landed interest of the country.

70. We know that the British House of Commons, without shutting its doors to any merit in any class, is, by the sure operation of adequate causes, filled with everything illustrious in rank, in descent, in hereditary and in acquired opulence, in cultivated talents, in military, civil, naval, and politic distinction, that the country can afford. But supposing, what hardly can be supposed as a case, that the House of Commons should be composed in the same manner with the *Tiers Etat* in France, would this dominion of chicane be borne with

Medical men  
are out of their  
proper sphere.

Stockjobbers  
are by nature  
speculators and  
selfish.

None are suit-  
ed to direct.

Our Commons  
are an illustrious  
body.

The situation  
in France would  
not be tolerated  
in England.

The evil is in  
the wrong pro-  
portion.

Professional  
men are igno-  
rant of human  
nature and of  
complex govern-  
ment.

Moreover in  
England ancient  
usages restrain;  
and states coun-  
terbalance each  
other.

patience, or even conceived without horror? God forbid I should insinuate anything derogatory to that profession, which is another priesthood, administrating the rights of sacred justice. But whilst I revere men in the functions which belong to them, and would do as much as one man can do to prevent their exclusion from any, I cannot, to flatter them, give the lie to nature. They are good and

10 useful in the composition; they must be mischievous if they preponderate so as virtually to become the whole. Their very excellence in their peculiar functions may be far from a qualification for others. It cannot escape observation, that when men are too much confined to professional and faculty habits,

and as it were inveterate in the recurrent employment of that narrow circle, they are rather disabled than qualified for whatever 20 depends on the knowledge of mankind, on experience in mixed affairs, on a comprehensive, connected view of the various, complicated, external and internal interests, which go to the formation of that multifarious thing called a state.

71. After all, if the House of Commons were to have a wholly professional and faculty composition, what is the power of the House of Commons, circumscribed and shut in by the 30 immovable barriers of laws, usages, positive rules of doctrine and practice, counterpoised by the House of Lords, and every moment of its existence at the discretion of the crown to continue, prorogue, or dissolve us? The power of the House of Commons, direct or indirect, is indeed great; and long may it be able to preserve its greatness, and the spirit belonging to true greatness, at the full; and it will do so, as long as it can keep the breakers of law in 40 India from becoming the makers of law for England. The power, however, of the House

of Commons, when least diminished, is as a drop of water in the ocean, compared to that residing in a settled majority of your National Assembly. That Assembly, since the destruction of the orders, has no fundamental law, no strict convention, no respected usage to restrain it. Instead of finding themselves obliged to conform to a fixed constitution, they have a power to make a constitution which shall conform to their designs. Nothing in heaven or upon earth can serve as a control on them. What ought to be the heads, the hearts, the dispositions, that are qualified, or that dare, not only to make laws under a fixed constitution, but at one heat to strike out a totally new constitution for a great kingdom, and in every part of it, from the monarch on the throne to the vestry of a parish? But—"fools rush in where angels fear to tread." In such a state of unbounded power for undefined and undefinable purposes, the evil of a moral and almost physical inaptitude of the man to the function must be the greatest we can conceive to happen in the management of human affairs.

72. Having considered the composition of the Third Estate as it stood in its original frame, I took a view of the representatives of the clergy. There too it appeared that full as little regard was had to the general security of property, or to the aptitude of the deputies for their public purposes, in the principles of their election. That election was so contrived, as to send a very large proportion of mere country curates to the great and arduous work of new-modelling a state; men who never had seen the state so much as in a picture; men who knew nothing of the world beyond the bounds of an obscure village; who, immersed in hopeless poverty, could regard all property, whether secular or ecclesiastical, with no other eye than that of

Your Assembly has nothing to restrain it.

Therefore great wisdom is required.

Unfitness is infinitely serious.

The estate of the Church.

Untrained curates elected;

liable to envy,

and to join with the attorneys.

Possibly elected through intriguing ambition.

Renegade nobles

adapted to be leaders of the Assembly.

Their selfishness places them against their own order.

- envy; among whom must be many who, for the smallest hope of the meanest dividend in plunder, would readily join in any attempts upon a body of wealth, in which they could hardly look to have any share, except in a general scramble. Instead of balancing the power of the active chicaners in the other assembly, these curates must necessarily become the active coadjutors, or at best the passive instruments, of those by whom they had been habitually guided in their petty village concerns. They too could hardly be the most conscientious of their kind, who, presuming upon their incompetent understanding, could intrigue for a trust which led them from their natural relation to their flocks, and their natural spheres of action, to undertake the regeneration of kingdoms. This preponderating weight, being added to the force of the body of chicanes in the *Tiers Etat*, completed that momentum of ignorance, rashness, presumption, and lust of plunder, which nothing has been able to resist.
73. To observing men it must have appeared from the beginning that the majority of the Third Estate, in conjunction with such a deputation from the clergy as I have described, whilst it pursued the destruction of the nobility, would inevitably become subservient to the worst designs of individuals in that class. In the spoil and humiliation of their own order these individuals would possess a sure fund for the pay of their new followers. To squander away the objects which made the happiness of their fellows, would be to them no sacrifice at all. Turbulent, discontented men of quality, in proportion as they are puffed up with personal pride and arrogance, generally despise their own order. One of the first symptoms 40 they discover of a selfish and mischievous ambition, is a profligate disregard of a dignity

which they partake with others. To be attached to the subdivision, to love the little platoon we belong to in society, is the first principle (the germ as it were) of public affections. It is the first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love to our country, and to mankind. The interest of that portion of social arrangement is a trust in the hands of all those who compose it; and as none but bad men would justify it in abuse, none but traitors would barter it away for their own personal advantage.

74. There were in the time of our civil troubles in England (I do not know whether you have any such in your Assembly in France) several persons, like the then Earl of Holland, who by themselves or their families had brought an odium on the throne, by the prodigal dispensation of its bounties towards them, who afterwards joined in the rebellions arising from the discontents of which they were themselves the cause; men who helped to subvert that throne to which they owed, some of them, their existence, others all that power which they employed to ruin their benefactor. If any bounds are set to the rapacious demands of that sort of people, or that others are permitted to partake in the objects they would engross, revenge and envy soon fill up the craving void that is left in their avarice. Confounded by the complication of distempered passions, their reason is disturbed; their views become vast and perplexed; to others inexplicable; to themselves uncertain. They find, on all sides, bounds to their unprincipled ambition in any fixed order of things. But in the fog and haze of confusion all is enlarged, and appears without any limit.

75. When men of rank sacrifice all ideas of dignity to an ambition without a distinct object, and work with low instruments and for low ends, the whole composition becomes low and base. Does not something like this now appear

How patriotism is created.

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Examples in English history:

20

their character illustrated;

30

their vague ambitions.

Such men debase the mass

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as is seen to-day.

Revolutionaries have often had great aims, and have advanced their countries.

The greatness of Cromwell.

Such men were naturally powerful.

- in France? Does it not produce something ignoble and inglorious? a kind of meanness in all the prevalent policy? a tendency in all that is done to lower along with individuals all the dignity and importance of the state? Other revolutions have been conducted by persons who, whilst they attempted or affected changes in the commonwealth, sanctified their ambition by advancing the dignity of the people whose peace they troubled. They had long views. They aimed at the rule, not at the destruction, of their country. They were men of great civil and great military talents, and if the terror, the ornament of their age. They were not like Jew brokers, contending with each other who could best remedy with fraudulent circulation and depreciated paper the wretchedness and ruin brought on their country by their degenerate councils. The compliment made to one of the great bad men of the old stamp (Cromwell) by his kinsman, a favourite poet of that time, shows what it was he proposed, and what indeed to a great degree he accomplished, in the success of his ambition:
- “ Still as *you* rise, the *state* exalted too,  
Finds no distemper whilst ‘tis changed by *you* ;  
Changed like the world’s great scene, when  
without noise  
The rising sun night’s *vulgar* lights destroys.”
76. These disturbers were not so much like men usurping power, as asserting their natural place in society. Their rising was to illuminate and beautify the world. Their conquest over their competitors was by outshining them. The hand that, like a destroying angel, smote the country, communicated to it the force and energy under which it suffered. I do not say (God forbid), I do not say that the virtues of such men were to be taken as a balance to their crimes: but they were some corrective to their effects. Such was, as I said, our Cromwell. Such were your whole race of

Guises, Condés, and Colignis. Such the Richelieus, who in more quiet times acted in the spirit of a civil war. Such, as better men, and in a less dubious cause, were your Henry the Fourth and your Sully, though nursed in civil confusions, and not wholly without some of their taint. It is a thing to be wondered at, to see how very soon France, when she had a moment to respire, recovered and emerged from the longest and most dreadful civil war that ever 10 was known in any nation. Why? Because among all their massacres, they had not slain the *mind* in their country. A conscious dignity, a noble pride, a generous sense of glory and emulation, was not extinguished. On the contrary, it was kindled and inflamed. The organs also of the state, however shattered, existed. All the prizes of honour and virtue, all the rewards, all the distinctions remained. But your present confusion, like a palsy, has 20 attacked the fountain of life itself. Every person in your country, in a situation to be actuated by a principle of honour, is disgraced and degraded, and can entertain no sensation of life, except in a mortified and humiliated indignation. But this generation will quickly pass away. The next generation of the nobility will resemble the artificers and clowns, and money-jobbers, usurers, and Jews, who will be always their fellows, sometimes their 30 masters. Believe me, Sir, those who attempt to level, never equalise. In all societies, consisting of various descriptions of citizens, some description must be uppermost. The levellers therefore only change and pervert the natural order of things; they load the edifice of society, by setting up in the air what the solidity of the structure requires to be on the ground. The association of tailors and carpenters, of which the republic (of Paris, for 40 instance) is composed, cannot be equal to the

So in France  
two centuries  
ago.

France recov-  
ered because  
mind remained ;  
and high distinc-  
tions.

The present is  
ignoble :

the future will  
be worse.

Not equality  
but perversity.

situation, into which, by the worst of usurpations, a usurpation on the prerogatives of nature, you attempt to force them.

What is honour?

Many occupations are incompatible with knowledge of statesmanship.

There are exceptions to all rules.

77. The Chancellor of France at the opening of the states, said, in a tone of oratorial flourish, that all occupations were honourable. If he meant only, that no honest employment was disgraceful, he would not have gone beyond the truth. But in asserting that anything is honourable, we imply some distinction in its favour. The occupation of a hair-dresser, or of a working tallow-chandler, cannot be a matter of honour to any person—to say nothing of a number of other more servile employments. Such descriptions of men ought not to suffer oppression from the state but the state suffers oppression, if such as they, either individually or collectively, are permitted to rule. In this you think you are combating prejudice, but you are at war with nature.<sup>1</sup>

78. I do not, my dear Sir, conceive you to be of that sophistical, captious spirit, or of that uncandid dulness, as to require, for every general observation or sentiment, an explicit detail of the correctives and exceptions, which

<sup>1</sup> Ecclesiasticus, chap. xxxviii., verses 24, 25. "The wisdom of a learned man cometh by opportunity of leisure: and he that hath little business shall become wise."—"How can he get wisdom that holdeth the plough, and that glorieth in the goad; that driveth oxen; and is occupied in their labours; and whose talk is of bullocks?"

Ver. 27. "So every carpenter and work-master that laboureth night and day," etc.

Ver. 33. "They shall not be sought for in public counsel, nor sit high in the congregation: they shall not sit on the judge's seat, nor understand the sentence of judgment; they cannot declare justice and judgment, and they shall not be found where parables are spoken."

Ver. 34. "But they will maintain the state of the world."

I do not determine whether this book be canonical, as the Gallican church (till lately) has considered it, or apocryphal, as here it is taken. I am sure it contains a great deal of sense and truth.

reason will presume to be included in all the general propositions which come from reasonable men. You do not imagine that I wish to confine power, authority, and distinction to blood, and names, and titles. No, Sir. There is no qualification for government but virtue and wisdom, actual or presumptive. Wherever they are actually found, they have, in whatever state, condition, profession, or trade, the passport of Heaven to human place and honour. Woe to the country which would madly and impiously reject the service of the talents and virtues, civil, military, or religious, that are given to grace and to serve it; and would condemn to obscurity everything formed to diffuse lustre and glory around a state ! Woe to that country too, that, passing into the opposite extreme, considers a low education, a mean contracted view of things, a sordid, mercenary occupation, as a preferable title to command ! Everything ought to be open ; but not indifferently to every man. No rotation ; no appointment by lot, no mode of election operating in the spirit of sortition, or rotation, can be generally good in a government conversant in extensive objects. Because they have no tendency, direct or indirect, to select the man with a view to the duty, or to accommodate the one to the other. I do not hesitate to say, that the road to eminence and power, from obscure condition, ought not to be made too easy, nor a thing too much of course. If rare merit be the rarest of all rare things, it ought to pass through some sort of probation. The temple of honour ought to be seated on an eminence. If it be opened through virtue, let it be remembered too that virtue is never tried but by some difficulty and some struggle.

79. Nothing is a due and adequate representation of a state, that does not represent its ability as well as its property. But as

Virtue and wisdom the sole ultimate qualifications.

All things should tend to bring these to the front.

Not accident.

Probation necessary. Men rise through trials.

Representation should belong to the able and the propertied,

to property most largely.

Great properties should be secure;

and able to protect smaller estates which have not the same defensive power and instinct.

Property must be hereditary.

The principle of transmission shown in, and secured by, the House of Lords.

ability is a vigorous and active principle, and as property is sluggish, inert, and timid, it never can be safe from the invasions of ability, unless it be, out of all proportion, predominant in the representation. It must be represented too in great masses of accumulation, or it is not rightly protected. The characteristic essence of property, formed out of the combined principles of its acquisition and conservation, is to be *unequal*. The great masses therefore which excite envy, and tempt rapacity, must be put out of the possibility of danger. Then they form a natural rampart about the lesser properties in all their gradations. The same quantity of property, which is by the natural course of things divided among many, has not the same operation. Its defensive power is weakened as it is diffused. In this diffusion each man's portion is less than what, in the eagerness of his desires, he may flatter himself to obtain by dissipating the accumulations of others. The plunder of the few would indeed give but a share inconceivably small in the distribution to the many. But the many are not capable of making this calculation; and those who lead them to rapine never intend this distribution.

80. The power of perpetuating our property in our families is one of the most valuable and interesting circumstances belonging to it, and that which tends the most to the perpetuation of society itself. It makes our weakness subservient to our virtue; it grafts benevolence even upon avarice. The possessors of family wealth, and of the distinction which attends hereditary possession (as most concerned in it), are the natural securities for this transmission. With us the House of Peers is formed upon this principle. It is wholly composed of hereditary property and hereditary distinction; and made therefore the third of the legislature; and, in the last event, the sole judge of all property in all

its subdivisions. The House of Commons too, though not necessarily, yet in fact, is always so composed, in the far greater part. Let those large proprietors be what they will, and they have their chance of being amongst the best, they are, at the very worst, the ballast in the vessel of the commonwealth. For though hereditary wealth, and the rank which goes with it, are too much idolised by creeping sycophants, and the blind, abject admirers of power, they are too rashly slighted in shallow speculations of the petulant, assuming, short-sighted coxcombs of philosophy. Some decent, regulated pre-eminence, some preference (not exclusive appropriation) given to birth, is neither unnatural, nor unjust, nor impolitic.

81. It is said that twenty-four millions ought to prevail over two hundred thousand. True; if the constitution of a kingdom be a problem of arithmetic. This sort of discourse does well enough with the lamb-post for its second; to men who *may* reason calmly, it is ridiculous. The will of the many, and their interest, must very often differ; and great will be the difference when they make an evil choice. A government of five hundred country attorneys and obscure curates is not good for twenty-four millions of men, though it were chosen by eight-and-forty millions; nor is it the better for being guided by a dozen of persons of quality, who have betrayed their trust in order to obtain that power. At present, you seem in everything to have strayed out of the high road of nature. The property of France does not govern it. Of course property is destroyed, and rational liberty has no existence. All you have got for the present is a paper circulation, and a stock-jobbing constitution; and, as to the future, do you seriously think that the territory of France, upon the republican system of eighty-three independent municipalities (to say nothing of the

The Commons also are propertied.

Even ignorant proprietors serve a useful purpose.

Reference to birth is proper.

The question of numbers.

There is no natural right in government, and the multitude do not know their own interests.

Election does not constitute competence.

The state of France is absurd.

The local divisions make unity impossible.

The Paris department now rules France,

but the others will repudiate this supremacy.

All will seek their own interests.

There will be no metropolis.

France is broken up.

Paris will struggle to retain its overlordship: in vain.

parts that compose them), can ever be governed as one body, or can ever be set in motion by the impulse of one mind? When the National Assembly has completed its work, it will have accomplished its ruin. These commonwealths will not long bear a state of subjection to the republic of Paris. They will not bear that this one body should monopolise the captivity of the king, and the dominion over the assembly calling itself National.

Each will keep its own portion of the spoil of the church to itself; and it will not suffer either that spoil, or the more just fruits of their industry, or the natural produce of their soil, to be sent to swell the insolence, or pamper the luxury, of the mechanics, of Paris. In this they will see none of the equality, under the pretence of which they have been tempted to throw off their allegiance to their sovereign, as well as the ancient constitution of their country.

There can be no capital city in such a constitution as they have lately made. They have forgot that when they framed democratic governments, they had virtually dismembered their country. The person, whom they persevere in calling king, has not power left to him by the hundredth part sufficient to hold together this collection of republics. The republic of Paris will endeavour indeed to complete the debauchery of the army, and illegally to perpetuate the assembly, without resort to its constituents, as the means of continuing its despotism. It will make efforts, by becoming the heart of a boundless paper circulation, to draw everything to itself; but in vain. All this policy in the end will appear as feeble as it is now violent.

82. If this be your actual situation, compared to the situation to which you were

called, as it were by the voice of God 'and man, I cannot find it in my heart to congratulate you on the choice you have made, or the success which has attended your endeavours. I can as little recommend to any other nation a conduct grounded on such principles, and productive of such effects. That I must leave to those who can see farther into your affairs than I am able to do, and who best know how far your actions are favourable to their designs. 10 The gentlemen of the Revolution Society, who were so early in their congratulations, appear to be strongly of opinion that there is some scheme of politics relative to this country, in which your proceedings may, in some way, be useful. For your Dr. Price, who seems to have speculated himself into no small degree of fervour upon this subject, addresses his auditory in the following very remarkable words: "I cannot conclude without recalling *particular-* 20 *ly* to your recollection a consideration which I have *more than once alluded to*, and which probably your thoughts have *been all along anticipating*; a consideration with which my mind is *impressed more than I can express*. I mean the consideration of the *favourableness of the present times to all exertions in the cause of liberty*."

83. It is plain that the mind of this *political* preacher was at the time big with some extraordinary design; and it is very probable that the thoughts of his audience, who understood him better than I do, did all along run before him in his reflection, and in the whole train of consequences to which it led. 30

84. Before I read that sermon, I really thought I had lived in a free country; and it was an error I cherished, because it gave me a greater liking to the country I lived in. I was indeed aware that a jealous, ever-waking 40 vigilance, to guard the treasure of our liberty

Thus I cannot congratulate, or approve.

Price who approves has some similar scheme in view for Britain.

The time thought favourable.

What is the grand design?

My old ideas.

Freedom is here an actual possession.

What more is wanted?

These men have reasons for palliating French crimes.

Are the following revolutionary designs desired here?

Summary of French doings:

overthrow of institutions,

confiscation,

voluntary taxation.

social equality,

not only from invasion, but from decay and corruption, was our best wisdom, and our first duty. However, I considered that treasure rather as a possession to be secured, than as a prize to be contended for. I did not discern how the present time came to be so very favourable to all *exertions* in the cause of freedom. The present time differs from any other only by the circumstance of what is doing in France.

- 10 If the example of that nation is to have an influence on this, I can easily conceive why some of their proceedings which have an unpleasant aspect, and are not quite reconcilable to humanity, generosity, good faith, and justice, are palliated with so much milky goodness towards the actors, and borne with so much heroic fortitude towards the sufferers. It is certainly not prudent to discredit the authority of an example we mean to follow. But
- 20 allowing this, we are led to a very natural question:—What is that cause of liberty, and what are those exertions in its favour, to which the example of France is so singularly auspicious? Is our monarchy to be annihilated, with all the laws, all the tribunals, and all the ancient corporations of the kingdom? Is every landmark of the country to be done away in favour of a geometrical and arithmetical constitution? Is the House of Lords to be voted useless?
- 30 Is episcopacy to be abolished? Are the church lands to be sold to Jews and jobbers; or given to bribe new-invented municipal republics into a participation in sacrilege? Are all the taxes to be voted grievances, and the revenue reduced to a patriotic contribution, or patriotic presents? Are silver shoe-buckles to be substituted in the place of the land tax and the malt tax, for the support of the naval strength of this kingdom? Are all orders, ranks, and distinctions to be confounded, that out of universal anarchy, joined to national

bankruptcy, three or four thousand democracies should be formed into eighty-three, and that they may all, by some sort of unknown attractive power, be organised into one? For this great end is the army to be seduced from its discipline and its fidelity, first by every kind of debauchery, and then by the terrible precedent of a donative in the increase of pay? Are the curates to be seduced from their bishops, by holding out to them the delusive hope of a dole out of the spoils of their own order? Are the citizens of London to be drawn from their allegiance by feeding them at the expense of their fellow-subjects? Is a compulsory paper currency to be substituted in the place of the legal coin of this kingdom? Is what remains of the plundered stock of public revenue to be employed in the wild project of maintaining two armies to watch over and to fight with each other? If these are the ends and means of the Revolution Society, I admit they are well assorted; and France may furnish them for both with precedents in point.

85. I see that your example is held out to shame us. I know that we are supposed a dull, sluggish race, rendered passive by finding our situation tolerable, and prevented by a mediocrity of freedom from ever attaining to its full perfection. Your leaders in France began by affecting to admire, almost to adore, the British constitution; but as they advanced, they came to look upon it with a sovereign contempt. The friends of your National Assembly amongst us have full as mean an opinion of what was formerly thought the glory of their country. The Revolution Society has discovered that the English nation is not free. They are convinced that the inequality in our representation is a "defect in our constitution so *gross and palpable as to make it excellent*"

excessive local government,

corruption of the army,

indiscipline in the church,

paper currency,

conflicting military organisations.

The English constitution now depreciated.

Demand for reform of the House of Commons.

Theories of representation;

essential to liberty;

present inadequacy;

contemplation of some calamity.

Insincerity of these men,

their fallacious argument.

chiefly in *form and theory*.<sup>1</sup> That a representation in the legislature of a kingdom is not only the basis of all constitutional liberty in it, but of "*all legitimate government*; that without it a *government* is nothing but a *usurpation*;" —that "when the representation is *partial*, the kingdom possesses liberty only *partially*; and if extremely partial, it gives only a *semblance*; and if not only extremely partial, but corruptly chosen, it becomes a *nuisance*." Dr. Price considers this inadequacy of representation as our *fundamental grievance*; and though, as to the corruption of this semblance of representation, he hopes it is not yet arrived to its full perfection of depravity, he fears that "nothing will be done towards gaining for us this *essential blessing*, until some *great abuse of power* again provokes our resentment, or some *great calamity* again alarms our fears, or perhaps till the acquisition of a *pure and equal representation by other countries*, whilst we are *mocked* with the *shadow*, kindles our *shame*." To this he subjoins a note in these words: "A representation chosen chiefly by the Treasury, and a *few* thousands of the *dregs* of the people, who are generally paid for their votes."

86. You will smile here at the consistency of those democratists, who, when they are not on their guard, treat the humbler part of the community with the greatest contempt, whilst, at the same time, they pretend to make them the depositaries of all power. It would require a long discourse to point out to you the many fallacies that lurk in the generality and equivocal nature of the terms "inadequate representation." I shall only say here, in justice to that old-fashioned constitution, under which we have long prospered, that our representation

<sup>1</sup> *Discourse on the Love of our Country*, 3rd edition, p. 39.

has been found perfectly adequate to all the purposes for which a representation of the people can be desired or devised. I defy the enemies of our constitution to show the contrary. To detail the particulars in which it is found so well to promote its ends, would demand a treatise on our practical constitution. I state here the doctrine of the Revolutionists, only that you and others may see what an opinion these gentlemen entertain of the constitution of their country, and why they seem to think that some great abuse of power, or some great calamity, as giving a chance for the blessing of a constitution according to their ideas, would be much palliated to their feelings ; you see *why they* are so much enamoured of your fair and equal representation, which being once obtained, the same effects might follow. You see they consider our House of Commons as only “a semblance,” “a form,” “a theory,” “a shadow,” “a mockery,” perhaps “a nuisance.”

87. These gentlemen value themselves on being systematic ; and not without reason. They must therefore look on this gross and palpable defect of representation, this fundamental grievance (so they call it), as a thing not only vicious in itself, but as rendering our whole government absolutely *illegitimate*, and not at all better than a downright *usurpation*. Another revolution, to get rid of this illegitimate and usurped government, would of course be perfectly justifiable, if not absolutely necessary. Indeed their principle, if you observe it with any attention, goes much further than to an alteration in the election of the House of Commons ; for, if popular representation, or choice, is necessary to the *legitimacy* of all government, the House of Lords is, at one stroke, bastardised and corrupted in blood. That House is no representative of the people at all, even in “semblance or in form.” The case of the crown is

Our representation has proved sufficient.

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They desire the French equality for destructive ends.

These men are thorough.

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For their ends another revolution is necessary.

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Their principles disallow the Lords, and the monarchy.

Even the Revolution of 1689 has no validity.

Desire for destruction, either of the civil states, or of the church establishment.

To gain their ends they will face ruin and confusion.

They eagerly look abroad for help.

altogether as bad. In vain the crown may endeavour to screen itself against these gentlemen by the authority of the establishment made on the Revolution. The Revolution which is resorted to for a title, on their system, wants a title itself. The Revolution is built, according to their theory, upon a basis not more solid than our present formalities, as it was made by a House of Lords, not representing any one but themselves; and by a House of Commons exactly such as the present, that is, as they term it, by a mere "shadow and mockery" of representation.

88. Something they must destroy, or they seem to themselves to exist for no purpose. One set is for destroying the civil power through the ecclesiastical; another, for demolishing the ecclesiastic through the civil. They are aware that the worst consequences might happen to the public in accomplishing this double ruin of church and state; but they are so heated with their theories, that they give more than hints that this ruin, with all the mischiefs that must lead to it and attend it, and which to themselves appear quite certain, would not be unacceptable to them, or very remote from their wishes. A man amongst them of great authority, and certainly of great talents, speaking of a supposed alliance between church and state, says, "Perhaps we must wait for the fall of the civil powers before this most unnatural alliance be broken. Calamitous no doubt will that time be. But what convulsion in the political world ought to be a subject of lamentation, if it be attended with so desirable an effect?" You see with what a steady eye these gentlemen are prepared to view the greatest calamities which can befall their country.

89. It is no wonder therefore, that with these ideas of everything in their constitution and government at home, either in church or state,

as illegitimate and usurped, or at best as a vain mockery, they look abroad with an eager and passionate enthusiasm. Whilst they are possessed by these notions, it is vain to talk to them of the practice of their ancestors, the fundamental laws of their country, the fixed form of a constitution, whose merits are confirmed by the solid test of long experience, and an increasing public strength and national prosperity. They despise experience as the wisdom of unlettered men; and as for the rest, they have wrought under-ground a mine that will blow up, at one grand explosion, all examples of antiquity, all precedents, charters, and acts of parliament. They have "the rights of men." Against these there can be no prescription; against these no agreement is binding: these admit no temperament, and no compromise: anything withheld from their full demand is so much of fraud and injustice. Against these their rights of men let no government look for security in the length of its continuance, or in the justice and lenity of its administration. The objections of these speculatists, if its forms do not quadrate with their theories, are as valid against such an old and beneficent government, as against the most violent tyranny, or the greenest usurpation. They are always at issue with governments, not on a question of abuse, but a question of competency, and a question of title. I have nothing to say to the clumsy subtlety of their political metaphysics. Let them be their amusement in the schools.—“*Illa se jacet in aula—Eolus, et clauso ventorum carcere regnet.*”—But let them not break prison to burst like a *Levanter*, to sweep the earth with their hurricane, and to break up the fountains of the great deep to overwhelm us.

90. Far am I from denying in theory, full as far is my heart from withholding in practice

Their own nation's history they disregard.

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The new specific: rights,

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admitting no compromise,

acknowledging no merits,

condemning all governments.

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Let them theorise in schools,

but keep silent in public.

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The true rights:

the advantages from society,

justice,

fruits of industry,

inheritance and transmission,

individual freedom and social participation.

Not equality of possession.

Social laws rest on compact.

(if I were of power to give or to withhold ), the *real* rights of men. In denying their false claims of right, I do not mean to injure those which are real, and are such as their pretended rights would totally destroy. If civil society be made for the advantage of man, all the advantages for which it is made become his right. It is an institution of beneficence ; and law itself is only beneficence acting by a rule. Men have a right to live by that rule; they have a right to justice, as between their fellows, whether their fellows are in public function or in ordinary occupation. They have a right to the fruits of their industry ; and to the means of making their industry fruitful. They have a right to the acquisitions of their parents; to the nourishment and improvement of their offspring ; to instruction in life, and to consolation in death. Whatever each man can separately do, without trespassing upon others, he has a right to do for himself; and he has a right to a fair portion of all which society, with all its combinations of skill and force, can do in his favour. In this partnership all men have equal rights ; but not to equal things. He that has but five shillings in the partnership, has as good a right to it as he that has five hundred pounds has to his larger proportion. But he has not a right to an equal dividend in the product of the joint stock; and as to the share of power, authority, and direction which each individual ought to have in the management of the state, that I must deny to be amongst the direct original rights of man in civil society ; for I have in my contemplation the civil social man, and no other. It is a thing to be settled by convention.

91. If civil society be the offspring of convention, that convention must be its law. That convention must limit and modify all the descriptions of constitution which are formed under it. Every sort of legislative, judicial, or executory

power are its creatures. They can have no being in any other state of things; and how can any man claim under the conventions of civil society, rights which do not so much as suppose its existence? rights which are absolutely repugnant to it? One of the first motives to civil society, and which becomes one of its fundamental rules, is, *that no man should be judge in his own cause.* By this each person has at once divested himself of the first fundamental right of uncovenanted man, that is, to judge for himself, and to assert his own cause. He abdicates all right to be his own governor. He inclusively, in a great measure, abandons the right of self-defence, the first law of nature. Men cannot enjoy the rights of an uncivil and of a civil state together. That he may obtain justice, he gives up his right of determining what it is in points the most essential to him. That he may secure some liberty, he makes a surrender in trust of the whole of it.

92. Government is not made in virtue of natural rights, which may and do exist in total independence of it; and exist in much greater clearness, and in a much greater degree of abstract perfection: but their abstract perfection is their practical defect. By having a right to everything they want everything. Government is a contrivance of human wisdom to provide for human *wants.* Men have a right that these wants should be provided for by this wisdom. Among these wants is to be reckoned the want, out of civil society, of a sufficient restraint upon their passions. Society requires not only that the passions of individuals should be subjected, but that even in the mass and body, as well as in the individuals, the inclinations of men should frequently be thwarted, their will controlled, and their passions brought into subjection. This can only be done *by a power out of*

Abstract natural rights do not extend to society.

These are abdicated for the sake of civil and social rights.

Government not a natural right but a contrivance,

securing needs.

One need is restraint.

For this end government is set up as an external power.

The question is a practical one.

All becomes matter of arrangement.

Constitutions and governments are highly complicated,

and need practical skill.

The science must rest on experience.

Difference of immediate and remote effects.

*themselves*; and not, in the exercise of its function, subject to that will and to those passions which it is its office to bridle and subdue. In this sense the restraints on men, as well as their liberties, are to be reckoned among their rights. But as the liberties and the restrictions vary with times and circumstances, and admit of infinite modifications, they cannot be settled upon any abstract rule; and nothing is so foolish as to discuss them upon that principle.

93. The moment you abate anything from the full rights of men, each to govern himself, and suffer any artificial, positive limitation upon those rights, from that moment the whole organisation of government becomes a consideration of convenience. This it is which makes the constitution of a state, and the due distribution of its powers, a matter of the most delicate and complicated skill. It requires a deep knowledge of human nature and human necessities, and of the things which facilitate or obstruct the various ends, which are to be pursued by the mechanism of civil institutions. The state is to have recruits to its strength, and remedies to its distempers. What is the use of discussing a man's abstract right to food or medicine? The question is upon the method of procuring and administering them. In that deliberation I shall always advise to call in the aid of the farmer and the physician, rather than the professor of metaphysics.

94. The science of constructing a commonwealth, or renovating it, or reforming it, is, like every other experimental science, not to be taught *a priori*. Nor is it a short experience that can instruct us in that practical science; because the real effects of moral causes are not always immediate; but that which in the first instance is prejudicial may be excellent in its remoter operation; and its excellence may arise even from the ill effects

it produces in the beginning. The reverse also happens: and very plausible schemes, with very pleasing commencements, have often shameful and lamentable conclusions. In states there are often some obscure and almost latent causes, things which appear at first view of little moment, on which a very great part of its prosperity or adversity may most essentially depend. The science of government being therefore so practical in itself, and intended for such practical purposes, a matter which requires experience, and even more experience than any person can gain in his whole life, however sagacious and observing he may be, it is with infinite caution that any man ought to venture upon pulling down an edifice, which has answered in any tolerable degree for ages the common purposes of society, or on building it up again, without having models and patterns of approved utility before his eyes.

95. These metaphysic rights entering into common life, like rays of light which pierce into a dense medium, are, by the laws of nature, refracted from their straight line. Indeed in the gross and complicated mass of human passions and concerns, the primitive rights of men undergo such a variety of refractions and reflections, that it becomes absurd to talk of them as if they continued in the simplicity of their original direction. The nature of man is intricate; the objects of society are of the greatest possible complexity: and therefore no simple disposition or direction of power can be suitable either to man's nature, or to the quality of his affairs. When I hear the simplicity of contrivance aimed at and boasted of in any new political constitutions, I am at no loss to decide that the artificers are grossly ignorant of their trade, or totally negligent of their duty. The simple governments are fundamentally defective, to say no worse of them. If you

Working of  
latent causes.

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Any change  
requires great  
caution.

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In practice  
rights are de-  
flected like rays  
entering a dense  
medium.

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The world is  
very complex.

40

Simple designs  
must fail.

The complexity of life must be responded to.

Theoretical rights are extremes, real rights are intermediate, to be reached approximately by consideration and compromise.

Might is not right.

Power must be restrained by prudence.

Men must be kept from self-injury.

- were to contemplate society in but one point of view, all these simple modes of polity are infinitely captivating. In effect each would answer its single end much more perfectly than the more complex is able to attain all its complex purposes. But it is better that the whole should be imperfectly and anomalously answered, than that, while some parts are provided for with great exactness, others might be totally neglected, or perhaps materially injured, by the over-care of a favourite member.

96. The pretended rights of these theorists are all extremes: and in proportion as they are metaphysically true, they are morally and politically false. The rights of men are in a sort of *middle*, incapable of definition, but not impossible to be discerned. The rights of men in governments are their advantages; and these are often in balances between differences of good; in compromises sometimes between good and evil, and sometimes between evil and evil. Political reason is a computing principle; adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing, morally and not metaphysically, or mathematically, true moral denominations.

97. By these theorists the right of the people is almost always sophistically confounded with their power. The body of the community, whenever it can come to act, can meet with no effectual resistance; but till power and right are the same, the whole body of them has no right inconsistent with virtue, and the first of all virtues, prudence. Men have no right to what is not reasonable, and to what is not for their benefit; for though a pleasant writer said, *Liceat perire poetis*, when one of them, in cold blood, is said to have leaped into the flames of a volcanic revolution, *Ardentem frigidus Etnam insiluit*, I consider such a frolic rather as an unjustifiable poetic licence, than as one of the franchises of Parnassus; [and whether he were poet, or]

divine, or politician that chose to exercise this kind of right, I think that more wise, because more charitable, thoughts would urge me rather to save the man, than to preserve his brazen slippers as the monuments of his folly.

Empedocles.

98. The kind of anniversary sermons to which a great part of what I write refers, if men are not shamed out of their present course, in commemorating the fact, will cheat many out of the principles, and deprive them of the benefits, of the Revolution they commemorate. I confess to you, Sir, I never liked this continual talk of resistance, and revolution, or the practice of making the extreme medicine of the constitution its daily bread. It renders the habit of society dangerously valetudinary: it is taking periodical doses of mercury sublimate, and swallowing down repeated provocatives of cantharides to our love of liberty.

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The benefits of the Revolution are imperilled by these constant references to it.

99. This distemper of remedy, grown habitual, relaxes and wears out, by a vulgar and prostituted use, the spring of that spirit which is to be exerted on great occasions. It was in the most patient period of Roman servitude that themes of tyrannicide made the ordinary exercise of boys at school—*cum perimit saevos classis numerosa tyrannos*. In the ordinary state of things, it produces in a country like ours the worst effects, even on the cause of that liberty which it abuses with the dissoluteness of an extravagant speculation. Almost all the high-bred republicans of my time have, after a short space, become the most decided, thorough-paced courtiers; they soon left the business of a tedious, moderate, but practical resistance, to those of us whom, in the pride and intoxication of their theories, they have slighted as not

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Real strength for great occasions is thus worn down.

They that talk most are often most submissive.

30

Our advanced aristocrats usually lapse into Toryism.

Some were in-  
sincere,

others, dis-  
appointed, d r a w  
back,

having little  
sense of principle.

In the country  
are some men of  
another type;  
steadfast in the  
persuit of ul-  
terior ends: dis-  
regardful of pre-  
sent conditions:  
unreliable asso-  
ciates:

and therefore  
inconstant.

much better than Tories. Hypocrisy, of course, delights in the most sublime speculations; for, never intending to go beyond speculation, it costs nothing to have it magnificent. But even in cases where rather levity than fraud was to be suspected in these ranting speculations, the issue has been much the same. These professors, finding their extreme principles not applicable to cases which call only for a qua-

lified, or, as I may say, civil and legal resist-  
ance, in such cases employ no resistance at  
all. It is with them a war or a revolution, or  
it is nothing. Finding their schemes of politics  
not adapted to the state of the world in which  
they live, they often come to think lightly of  
all public principle; and are ready, on their  
part, to abandon for a very trivial interest  
what they find of very trivial value. Some  
indeed are of more steady and persevering na-  
tures; but these are eager politicians out of  
parliament, who have little to tempt them to  
abandon their favourite projects. They have  
some change in the church or state, or both,  
constantly in their view. When that is the  
case, they are always bad citizens, and per-  
fectedly unsure connections. For, considering  
their speculative designs as of infinite value,  
and the actual arrangement of the state as of  
no estimation, they are at-best indifferent about

30 it. They see no merit in the good, and no  
fault in the vicious, management of public  
affairs; they rather rejoice in the latter, as  
more propitious to revolution. They see no  
merit or demerit in any man, or any action, or  
any political principle, any further than as they  
may forward or retard their design of change:  
they therefore take up, one day, the most violent  
and stretched prerogative, and another time the  
wildest democratic ideas of freedom, and pass  
40 from the one to the other without any sort of  
regard to cause, to person, or to party.

100. In France you are now in the crisis of a revolution, and in the transit from one form of government to another—you cannot see that character of men exactly in the same situation in which we see it in this country. With us it is militant; with you it is triumphant; and you know how it can act when its power is commensurate to its will. I would not be supposed to confine those observations to any description of men, or to comprehend all men of 10 any description within them—No! far from it. I am as incapable of that injustice, as I am of keeping terms with those who profess principles of extremes; and who, under the name of religion, teach little else than wild and dangerous politics. The worst of these politics of revolution is this: they temper and harden the breast, in order to prepare it for the desperate strokes which are sometimes used in extreme occasions. But as these occasions may never arrive, the mind receives a gratuitous taint; and the moral sentiments suffer not a little, when no political purpose is served by the depravation. This sort of people are so taken up with their theories about the rights of man, that they have totally forgotten his nature. Without opening one new avenue to the understanding, they have succeeded in stopping up those that lead to the heart. They have perverted in themselves, and in those that attend to them, 30 all the well-placed sympathies of the human breast.

101. This famous sermon of the Old Jewry breathes nothing but this spirit through all the political part. Plots, massacres, assassinations, seem to some people a trivial price for obtaining a revolution. A cheap, bloodless reformation, a guiltless liberty, appear flat and vapid to their taste. There must be a great change of scene; there must be a magnificent stage 40 effect; there must be a grand spectacle

Your present crisis shows men otherwise: they are carrying out their will, not shifting and scheming.

But I do not refer to large classes.

20

Evil effect on character. The heart is hardened to meet a crisis that may not come.

Natural sympathies are perverted.

30

This bad spirit  
is shewn in  
Price's sermon.

40

He loves a spectacle of horrors.

Childish enthusiasm.

A climax of joyful experiences.

Price anticipated by Peters,

- to rouse the imagination, grown torpid with the lazy enjoyment of sixty years' security, and the still unanimating repose of public prosperity. The preacher found them all in the French Revolution. This inspires a juvenile warmth through his whole frame. His enthusiasm kindles as he advances; and when he arrives at his peroration it is in a full blaze. Then viewing, from the Pisgah of his pulpit, 10 the free, moral, happy, flourishing, and glorious state of France, as in a bird's-eye landscape of a promised land, he breaks out into the following rapture:
102. "What an eventful period is this! I am *thankful* that I have lived to it; I could almost say, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*—I have lived to see a diffusion of knowledge, which has undermined superstition and error.— 20 I have lived to see the *rights of men* better understood than ever; and nations panting for liberty which seemed to have lost the idea of it.—I have lived to see *thirty millions of people*, indignant and resolute, spurning at slavery, and demanding liberty with an irresistible voice. *Their king led in triumph, and an arbitrary monarch surrendering himself to his subjects.*"<sup>1</sup>
103. Before I proceed further, I have to remark that Dr. Price seems rather to over-value the great acquisitions of light which he has obtained and diffused in this age. The last century appears to me to have been quite as much enlightened. It had, though in a different place, a triumph as memorable as that

<sup>1</sup> Another of these reverend gentlemen, who was witness to some of the spectacles which Paris has lately exhibited, expresses himself thus:—"A king dragged in submissive triumph by his conquering subject is one of those appearances of grandeur which seldom rise in the prospect of human affairs, and which, during the remainder of my life, I shall think of with wonder and gratification." These gentlemen agree marvellously in their feelings.

of Dr. Price; and some of the great preachers of that period partook of it as eagerly as he has done in the triumph of France. On the trial of the Rev. Hugh Peters for high treason, it was deposed that when King Charles was brought to London for his trial, the Apostle of Liberty in that day conducted the *triumph*. "I saw," says the witness, "his Majesty in the coach with six horses, and Peters riding before the king, *triumphing*." Dr. Price, when he 10 talks as if he had made a discovery, only follows a precedent; for, after the commencement of the king's trial, this precursor, the same Dr. Peters, concluding a long prayer at the Royal Chapel at Whitehall (he had very triumphantly chosen his place), said, "I have prayed and preached these twenty years; and now I may say with old Simeon, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*"<sup>1</sup> Peters had not the fruits of his 20 prayer; for he neither departed so soon as he wished, nor in peace. He became (what I heartily hope none of his followers may be in this country) himself a sacrifice to the triumph which he led as pontiff. They dealt at the Restoration, perhaps, too hardly with this poor good man. But we owe it to his memory and his sufferings, that he had as much illumination, and as much zeal, and had as effectually undermined all the *superstition and error* which might impede the great business he was engaged in, as any who follow and repeat after him, in this age, which would assume to itself an exclusive title to the knowledge of the rights of men, and all the glorious consequences of that knowledge.

104. After this sally of the preacher of the Old Jewry, which differs only in place and time, but agrees perfectly with the spirit and letter of the rapture of 1648, the Revolution Society,

who triumphed over Charles I.,

but was afterwards executed.

He was quite the equal of Price.

The sermon followed by the address to the National Assembly,

<sup>1</sup> *State Trials*, vol. ii., pp. 360, 363.

Inability to  
enforce law.

A strange  
congratulation.

New-fashion-  
ed etiquette:

to tell a humili-  
ated king that  
benefits will flow  
from his disgrace.

innocent gentlemen in their houses, that "the blood spilled was not the most pure!" What must they have felt, when they were besieged by complaints of disorders which shook their country to its foundations, at being compelled coolly to tell the complainants that they were under the protection of the law, and that they would address the king (the captive king) to cause the laws to be enforced for their protection; when the enslaved ministers of that captive king had formally notified to them that there were neither law, nor authority, nor power left to protect! What must they have felt at being obliged, as a felicitation on the present new year, to request their captive king to forget the stormy period of the last, on account of the great good which *he* was likely to produce to his people; to the complete attainment of which good they ~~attained~~ turned the practical demonstrations of their loyalty, assuring him of their obedience, when he should no longer possess any authority to command!

110. This address was made with much good nature and affection, to be sure. But among the revolutions in France must be reckoned a considerable revolution in their ideas of politeness. In England we are said to learn manners at second-hand from your side of the water, and that we dress our behaviour in the frippery of France. If so, we are still in the old cut; and have not so far conformed to the new Parisian mode of good breeding, as to think it quite in the most refined strain of delicate compliment (whether in condolence or congratulation) to say, to the most ~~esteemed~~ creature that crawls upon the earth, that great public benefits are derived from the murder of his servants, the attempted assassination of himself and of his wife, and the mortification, disgrace, and degradation that he has personally suffered. It is a topic of consolation which our

ordinary of Newgate would be too humane to use to a criminal at the foot of the gallows. I should have thought that the hangman of Paris, now that he is liberalised by the vote of the National Assembly, and is allowed his rank and arms in the heralds' college of the rights of men, would be too generous, too gallant a man, too full of the sense of his new dignity, to employ that cutting consolation to any of the persons whom the *leze nation* might bring under the administration of his *executive power*.

10

We would not so insult the lowest criminal.

The Paris executioner should be now above it.

III. A man is fallen indeed when he is thus flattered. The anodyne draught of oblivion, thus drugged, is well calculated to preserve a galling wakefulness, and to feed the living ulcer of a corroding memory. Thus to administer the opiate potion of amnesty, powdered with all the ingredients of scorn and contempt, is to hold to his lips, instead of "the balm of hurt minds," the cup of human misery full to the brim, and to force him to drink it to the dregs.

20

Such consolation is an unforgettable sorrow.

III. Yielding to reasons, at least as forcible as those which were so delicately urged in the compliment on the new year, the King of France will probably endeavour to forget these events and that compliment. But history, who keeps a durable record of all our acts, and exercises her awful censure over the proceedings of all sorts of sovereigns, will not forget either those events, or the era of this liberal refinement in the intercourse of mankind. History will record that on the morning of the 6th of October, 1789, the King and Queen of France, after a day of confusion, alarm, dismay, and slaughter, lay down, under the pledged security of public faith, to indulge nature in a few hours of respite, and troubled, melancholy repose. From this sleep the Queen was first startled by the voice of the sentinel at her

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History at least will remember.

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The outrage recorded.

Some leaders  
are extremely  
wicked.

Behind the  
clubs are the aca-  
demies.

Therein vio-  
lent and cruel  
counsel is pre-  
ferred.

Individual  
rights are disre-  
garded.

Very many  
are ruined.

The Assem-  
ly is devoid also  
of dignity.

coffee-houses. It is notorious that all their measures are decided before they are debated. It is beyond doubt that under the terror of the bayonet, and the lamp-post, and the torch to their houses, they are obliged to adopt all the crude and desperate measures suggested by clubs composed of a monstrous medley of all conditions, tongues, and nations. Among these are found persons, in comparison of whom 10 Catiline would be thought scrupulous, and Cethegus a man of sobriety and moderation. Nor is it in these clubs alone that the public measures are deformed into monsters. They undergo a previous distortion in academies, intended as so many seminaries for these clubs, which are set up in all the places of public resort. In these meetings of all sorts, every counsel, in proportion as it is daring, and violent, and perfidious, is taken for the mark 20 of superior genius. Humanity and compassion are ridiculed as the fruits of superstition and ignorance. Tenderness to individuals is considered as treason to the public. Liberty is always to be estimated perfect as property is rendered insecure. Amidst assassination, massacre, and confiscation, perpetrated or meditated, they are forming plans for the good order of future society. Embracing in their arms the carcases of base criminals, and pro- 30 moting their relations on the title of their offences, they drive hundreds of virtuous persons to the same end, by forcing them to subsist by beggary or by crime.

108. The Assembly, their organ, acts before them the farce of deliberation with as little decency as liberty. They act like the comedians of a fair before a riotous audience ; they act amidst the tumultuous cries of a mixed mob of ferocious men, and of women lost to 40 shame, who, according to their insolent fancies, direct, control, applaud, explode them ; and

sometimes mix and take their seats amongst them ; domineering over them with a strange mixture of servile petulance and proud, presumptuous authority. As they have inverted order in all things, the gallery is in the place of the house. This Assembly, which overthrows kings and kingdoms, has not even the physiognomy and aspect of a grave legislative body—*nec color imperii, nec frons ulla senatus.* They have a power given to them, like that of the evil principle, to subvert and destroy ; but none to construct, except such machines as may be fitted for further subversion and further destruction.

109. Who is it that admires, and from the heart is attached to, national representative assemblies, but must turn with horror and disgust from such a profane burlesque, and abominable perversion of that sacred institute ? Lovers of monarchy, lovers of republics, must alike abhor it. The members of your Assembly must themselves groan under the tyranny of which they have all the shame, none of the direction, and little of the profit. I am sure many of the members composing even the majority of that body must feel as I do, notwithstanding the applauses of the Revolution Society. Miserable King ! miserable Assembly ! How must that assembly be silently scandalised with those of their members who could call a day which seemed to blot the sun out of heaven, “*un beau jour !*”<sup>1</sup> How must they be inwardly indignant at hearing others, who thought fit to declare to them “that the vessel of the state would fly forward in her course towards regeneration with more speed than ever,” from the stiff gale of treason and murder which preceded our preacher’s triumph ! What must they have felt, whilst, with outward patience, and inward indignation, they heard of the slaughter of

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They are im-  
potent except  
for evil.

It is a burles-  
que of a national  
assembly.

Its members  
must feel ashamed.

Examples of  
indignity.

in eagerness  
to diffuse their  
knowledge.

Price again  
prominent.

Profanation of  
scripture.

Taking plea-  
sure in disgrace.

The event of  
the 6th Oct. com-  
parable to a pro-  
cession of savages.

Unlike genero-  
sity or civilisa-  
tion.

the fabricators of governments, the heroic band of *cashierers of monarchs*, electors of sovereigns, and leaders of kings in triumph, strutting with a proud consciousness of the diffusion of knowledge, of which every member had obtained so large a share in the donative, were in haste to make a generous diffusion of the knowledge they had thus gratuitously received. To make this bountiful communication, they adjourned from the church in the Old Jewry to the London Tavern ; where the same Dr. Price, in whom the fumes of his oracular tripod were not entirely evaporated, moved and carried the resolution, or address of congratulation, transmitted by Lord Stanhope to the National Assembly of France.

105. I find a preacher of the gospel profaning the beautiful and prophetic ejaculation, commonly called "*nunc dimittis*," made on the first presentation of our Saviour in the temple, and applying it, with an inhuman and unnatural rapture, to the most horrid, atrocious, and afflicting spectacle that perhaps ever was exhibited to the pity and indignation of mankind. This "*leading in triumph*," a thing in its best form unmanly and irreligious, which fills our preacher with such unhallowed transports, must shock, I believe, the moral taste of every well-born mind. Several English were the stupefied and indignant spectators of that triumph. It was (unless we have been strangely deceived) a spectacle more resembling a procession of American savages, entering into Onondaga, after some of their murders called victories, and leading into hovels hung round with scalps, their captives, overpowered with the scoffs and buffets of women as ferocious as themselves, much more than it resembled the triumphal pomp of a civilised, martial nation ;— if a civilised nation, or any men who had a sense.

of generosity, were capable of a personal triumph over the fallen and afflicted.

106. This, my dear Sir, was not the triumph of France. I must believe that, as a nation, it overwhelmed you with shame and horror. I must believe that the National Assembly find themselves in a state of the greatest humiliation in not being able to punish the authors of this triumph, or the actors in it; and that they are in a situation in which any inquiry they may make upon the subject must be destitute even of the appearance of liberty or impartiality. The apology of that Assembly is found in their situation ; but when we approve what they *must* bear, it is in us the degenerate choice of a vitiated mind.

107. With a compelled appearance of deliberation, they vote under the dominion of a stern necessity. They sit in the heart, as it were, of a foreign republic: they have their residence in a city whose constitution has emanated neither from the charter of their king, nor from their legislative power. There they are surrounded by an army not raised either by the authority of their crown, or by their command; and which, if they should order to dissolve itself, would instantly dissolve them. There they sit, after a gang of assassins had driven away some hundreds of the members ; whilst those who held the same moderate principles, with more patience or better hope, continued every day exposed to outrageous insults and murderous threats. There a majority, sometimes real, sometimes pretended, captive itself, compels a captive king to issue as royal edicts, at third hand, the polluted nonsense of their most licentious and giddy

Not the doings of France.

Nor is its Assembly free.

But English approvers are more to be blamed.

The Assembly are intimidated by the mob and the army of Paris.

They must bow to illegal force;

some members expelled, others threatened.

The king has to issue edicts, prepared in the clubs.

The Queen's narrow escape.

door, who cried out to her to save herself by flight—that this was the last proof of fidelity he could give—that they were upon him, and he was dead. Instantly he was cut down. A band of cruel ruffians and assassins, reeking with his blood, rushed into the chamber of the Queen, and pierced with a hundred strokes of bayonets and poniards the bed, from whence this persecuted woman had but just time to fly  
10 almost naked, and, through ways unknown to the murderers, had escaped to seek refuge at the feet of a king and husband, not secure of his own life for a moment.

The royal party brought to Paris.

113. This king, to say no more of him, and this queen, and their infant children (who once would have been the pride and hope of a great and generous people), were then forced to abandon the sanctuary of the most splendid palace in the world, which they left swimming in

20 blood, polluted by massacre, and strewed with scattered limbs and mutilated carcases. Thence they were conducted into the capital of their kingdom. Two had been selected from the unprovoked, unresisted, promiscuous slaughter which was made of the gentlemen of birth and family who composed the king's bodyguard. These two gentlemen, with all the parade of an execution of justice, were cruelly and publicly dragged to the block, and beheaded in the great

30 court of the palace. Their heads were stuck upon spears, and led the procession; whilst the royal captives who followed in the train were slowly moved along, amidst the horrid yells, and shrilling screams, and frantic dances, and infamous contumelies, and all the unutterable abominations of the furies of hell, in the abused shape of the vilest of women. After they had been made to taste, drop by drop, more than the bitterness of death, in the slow torture of a journey of twelve miles, protracted to six hours, they were, under a guard, composed

Body-guards beheaded.

Frantic women.

Slow agony.

of those very soldiers who had thus conducted them through this famous triumph, lodged in one of the old palaces of Paris, now converted into a bastile for kings.

The Tuilleries made their prison.

114. Is this a triumph to be consecrated at altars? to be commemorated with grateful thanksgiving? to be offered to the divine humanity with fervent prayer and enthusiastic ejaculation?—These Theban and Thracian orgies, acted in France, and applauded only in the Old Jewry, I assure you, kindle prophetic enthusiasm in the minds but of very few people in this kingdom: although a saint and apostle, who may have revelations of his own, and who has so completely vanquished all the mean superstitions of the heart, may incline to think it pious and decorous to compare it with the entrance into the world of the Prince of Peace, proclaimed in a holy temple by a venerable sage, and not long before not worse announced by the voice of angels to the quiet innocence of shepherds.

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Like a bacchanalian orgy.

How unlike the reception of the Prince of Peace

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115. At first I was at a loss to account for this fit of unguarded transport. I knew, indeed, that the sufferings of monarchs make a delicious repast to some sort of palates. There were reflections which might serve to keep this appetite within some bounds of temperance. But when I took one circumstance into my consideration, I was obliged to confess that much allowance ought to be made for the society, and that the temptation was too strong for common discretion; I mean, the circumstance of the Io Pæan of the triumph, the animating cry which called “for *all* the BISHOPS to be hanged on the lamp-posts,”<sup>1</sup> might well have brought forth a burst of enthusiasm on the foreseen consequences of this happy day. I allow to so much enthusiasm some little deviation from prudence. I allow this prophet to

Burke's explanation of Price's delight.

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The demonstration against bishops.

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<sup>1</sup> Tous les Evêques à la lanterne.

ideas and feelings  
due to chivalry

which was the  
distinction of  
Europe:

which atoned  
for social inequa-  
lities,

and made  
kings mild.

Beautifying  
ideas are to be  
swept away;

and human  
nature left bare.

chivalry; and the principle, though varied in its appearance by the varying state of human affairs, subsisted and influenced through a long succession of generations, even to the time we live in. If it should ever be totally extinguished, the loss I fear will be great. It is this which has given its character to modern Europe. It is this which has distinguished it under all its forms of government, and distinguished it to its advantage, from the states of Asia, and possibly from those states which flourished in the most brilliant periods of the antique world. It was this which, without confounding ranks, had produced a noble equality, and handed it down through all the gradations of social life. It was this opinion which mitigated kings into companions, and raised private men to be fellows with kings. Without force or opposition, it subdued the fierceness of pride and power; it obliged sovereigns to submit to the soft collar of social esteem, compelled stern authority to submit to elegance, and gave a dominating vanquisher of laws to be subdued by manners.

121. But now all is to be changed. All the pleasing illusions, which made power gentle and obedience liberal, which harmonised the different shades of life, and which, by a bland assimilation, incorporated into politics the sentiments which beautify and soften private society, are to be dissolved by this new conquering empire of light and reason. All the decent drapery of life is to be rudely torn off. All the superadded ideas, furnished from the wardrobe of a moral imagination, which the heart owns, and the understanding ratifies, as necessary to cover the defects of our naked, shivering nature, and to raise it to dignity in our own estimation, are to be exploded as a ridiculous, absurd, and antiquated fashion.

122. On this scheme of things, a king is but a man, a queen is but a woman; a woman is but an animal, and an animal not of the highest order. All homage paid to the sex in general as such, and without distinct views, is to be regarded as romance and folly. Regicide, and parricide, and sacrilege are but fictions of superstition, corrupting jurisprudence by destroying its simplicity. The murder of a king, or a queen, or a bishop, or a father, are 10 only common homicide; and if the people are by any chance, or in any way, gainers by it, a sort of homicide much the most pardonable, and into which we ought not to make too severe a scrutiny.

123. On the scheme of this barbarous philosophy, which is the offspring of cold hearts and muddy understandings, and which is as void of solid wisdom as it is destitute of all taste and elegance, laws are to be supported 20 only by their own terrors, and by the concern which each individual may find in them from his own private speculations, or can spare to them from his own private interests. In the groves of *their* academy, at<sup>t</sup> the end of every vista, you see nothing but the gallows. Nothing is left which engages the affections on the part of the commonwealth. On the principles of this mechanic philosophy, our institutions can never be embodied, if I may 30 use the expression, in persons; so as to create in us love, veneration, admiration, or attachment. But that sort of reason which banishes the affections is incapable of filling their place. These public affections, combined with manners, are required sometimes as supplements, sometimes as correctives, always as aids to law. The precept given by a wise man, as well as a great critic, for the construction of poems, is equally true as to states:—*Non satis est pulchra esse poemata, dulcia suntio.* There 40

Royalty is nothing;

homage a fanciful thing:

regicide may be a boon.

If so, law will be up-held only by its terrors.

No institution will be loved.

Such love ought to exist.

Hence the  
joyous indiscre-  
tion.

Behaviour of  
the king; endur-  
ance and grief.

His feelings  
as a man, and as  
a sovereign.

Let us recog-  
nise his virtues.

Dignity and  
serenity of the  
queen.

worthy of her  
birth.

royal infants, insensible only through in-  
fancy and innocence of the cruel outrages to  
which their parents were exposed, instead  
of being a subject of exultation, adds not a  
little to my sensibility on that most melancho-  
ly occasion.

117. I hear that the august person who  
was the principal object of our preacher's  
triumph, though he supported himself, felt  
much on that shameful occasion. As a man,  
it became him to feel for his wife and his  
children, and the faithful guards of his person,  
that were massacred in cold blood about him;  
as a prince, it became him to feel for the  
strange and frightful transformation of his  
civilised subjects, and to be more grieved for  
them than solicitous for himself. It de-  
rogates little from his fortitude, while it adds  
infinitely to the honour of his humanity. I am  
20 very sorry to say it, very sorry indeed, that  
such personages are in a situation in which  
it is not becoming in us to praise the virtues  
of the great.

118. I hear, and I rejoice to hear, that the  
great lady, the other object of the triumph, has  
borne that day (one is interested that beings  
made for suffering should suffer well), and that  
she bears all the succeeding days, that she  
bears the imprisonment of her husband, and  
30 her own captivity, and the exile of her friends,  
and the insulting adulation of addresses, and  
the whole weight of her accumulated wrongs,  
with a serene patience, in a manner suited to  
her rank and race, and becoming the offspring  
of a sovereign distinguished for her piety and  
her courage; that, like her, she has lofty  
sentiments; that she feels with the dignity of  
a Roman matron; that in the last extremity she  
will save herself from the last disgrace; and  
40 that, if she must fall, she will fall by no  
ignoble hand.

119. It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the Queen of France, then the dauphiness, at Versailles ; and surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision. I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just began to move in, —glittering like the morning-star, full of life, and splendour, and joy. Oh ! what a revolution ! and what a heart must I have to contemplate without emotion that elevation and that fall ! Little did I dream when she added titles of veneration to those of enthusiastic, distant, respectful love, that she should ever be obliged to carry the sharp antidote against disgrace concealed in that bosom ; little did I dream that I should have lived to see such disasters fallen upon her in a nation of gallant men, in a nation of men of honour, and of cavaliers. I thought ten thousand swords must have leaped 20 from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult. But the age of chivalry is gone. That of sophisters, economists, and calculators has succeeded ; and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever. Never, never more shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart, which kept alive, even in servitude itself, the spirit of an exalted freedom. The unbought grace of life, the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise, is gone ! It is gone, that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honour, which felt a stain like a wound, which inspired courage whilst it mitigated ferocity, which ennobled whatever it touched, and under which vice itself lost half its evil, by losing all its grossness.

120. This mixed system of opinion and 40 sentiment had its origin in the ancient

The queen  
sixteen years ago.

beauty and  
splendour.

10

Veneration.

chivalrous  
emotions.

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The great  
change in history.

30

The world's  
great loss.

These higher

40

The triumph incomplete.

The design only planned.

An incomplete picture.

Some bold person may finish it after the king shall have suffered more.

break forth into hymns of joy and thanksgiving on an event which appears like the precursor of the Millennium, and the projected fifth monarchy, in the destruction of all church establishments. There was, however (as in all human affairs there is), in the midst of this joy, something to exercise the patience of these worthy gentlemen, and to try the long-suffering of their faith. The actual murder of the king and queen, and their child, was wanting to the other auspicious circumstances of this "*beautiful day*." The actual murder of the bishops, though called for by so many holy ejaculations, was also wanting. A group of regicide and sacrilegious slaughter was indeed boldly sketched, but it was only sketched. It unhappily was left unfinished, in this great history-piece of the massacre of innocents. What hardy pencil of a great master, from the school of the rights of men, will finish it, is to be seen hereafter. The age has not yet the complete benefit of that diffusion of knowledge that has undermined superstition and error; and the King of France wants another object or two to consign to oblivion, in consideration of all the good which is to arise from his own sufferings, and the patriotic crimes of an enlightened age.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is proper here to refer to a letter written upon this subject by an eye-witness. That eye-witness was one of the most honest, intelligent, and eloquent members of the National Assembly, one of the most active and zealous reformers of the state. He was obliged to secede from the assembly; and he afterwards became a voluntary exile, on account of the horrors of this pious triumph, and the dispositions of men who, profiting of crimes, if not causing them, have taken the lead in public affairs.

*Extract of M. de Lally Tollendal's Second Letter to a Friend.*

"Parlons du parti que j'ai pris ; il est bien justifié dans ma conscience.—Ni cette ville coupable, ni cette assemblée plus coupable encore, ne meritoient que je me justifie ; mais j'ai à cœur que vous, et les personnes qui pensent comme vous, ne me condamnent pas.—Ma santé, je vous jure, me rendoit mes fonctions impossibles ; mais même en les mettant de côté il a été au-dessus de mes forces de supporter plus longtems l'horreur que me causoit ce sang,—ces têtes—cette reine *presque égorgéé*,—ce roi,—amené esclave,—entrant à Paris, au milieu de ses assassins, et précédé des têtes de ses malheureux gardes—ces perfides janissaires, ces assassins, ces femmes cannibales, ce cri de TOUS LES EVEQUES A LA LANTERNE, dans le moment

116. Although this work of our new light and knowledge did not go to the length that in all probability it was intended it should be carried, yet I must think that such treatment of any human creatures must be shocking to any but those who are made for accomplishing revolutions. But I cannot stop here. Influenced by the inborn feelings of my nature, and not being illuminated by a single ray of this new-sprung modern light, I confess to you, Sir, 10 that the exalted rank of the persons suffering, and particularly the sex, the beauty, and the amiable qualities of the descendant of so many kings and emperors, with the tender age of

The even t  
shocking to all.

Burke's perso-  
nal emotions; in-  
tensified by the  
descent and the  
charms of the  
queen.

où le roi entre sa capitale avec deux évêques de son conseil dans sa voiture —un *coup de fusil*, que j'ai vu tirer dans un *des carrosses de la reine*. M. Bailly appellant cela *un beau jour*,—l'assemblée ayant déclaré froidement le matin, qu'il n'étoit pas de sa dignité d'aller toute entière environner le roi—M. Mirabeau disant impunément dans cette assemblée que le vaisseau de l'état, loins d'être arrêté dans sa course, s'élançeroit avec plus de rapidité que jamais vers sa régénération—M. Barnave, riant avec lui, quand des flots de sang coulaient autour de nous—le vertueux Mounier\* échappant par miracle à vingt assassins, qui avoient voulu faire de sa tête un trophée de plus: Voilà ce qui me fit jurer de ne plus mettre le pied *dans cette grotte d'Antropophages* [the National Assembly] où je n'avois plus de force d'élever la voix, où depuis six semaines je l'avois élevée en vain.

“Moi, Mounier, et tous les honnêtes gens, ont pensé que le dernier effort à faire pour le bien étoit d'en sortir. Aucune idée de crainte ne s'est approchée de moi. Je rougirais de m'en défendre. J'avois encore reçu sur la route de la part de ce peuple, moins coupable que ceux qui l'ont enivré de fureur, des acclamations, et des applaudissements, dont d'autres auroient été flattés, et qui m'ont fait frémir. C'est à l'indignation, c'est à l'horreur, c'est aux convulsions physiques, que le seul aspect du sang me fait éprouver que j'ai cédé. On brave une seul mort; on la brave plusieurs fois, quand elle peut être utile. Mais aucune puissance sous le Ciel, mais aucune opinion publique ou privée n'ont le droit de me condamner à souffrir inutilement mille supplices par minute, et à perir de désespoir, de rage, au milieu des *triomphes*, du crime que je n'ai pu arrêter. Ils me proscriront, ils confisqueront mes biens. Je labourerai la terre, et je ne les verrai plus.—Voilà ma justification. Vous pourrez la lire, la montrer, la laisser copier; tant pis pour ceux qui ne la comprendront pas; ce ne sera alors moi qui auroit eu tort de la leur donner.”

This military man had not so good nerves as the peaceable gentleman of the Old Jewry.—See Mons. Mounier's narrative of these transactions; a man also of honour, and virtue, and talents, and therefore a fugitive.

\* N. B.—Mr. Mounier was then speaker of the National Assembly. He has since been obliged to live in exile, though one of the firmest assertors of liberty.

ought to be a system of manners in every nation, which a well-formed mind would be disposed to relish. To make us love our country, our country ought to be lovely.

The effect will  
be pernicious:

power will  
still maintain  
itself,

but kings will  
revert to me-  
thods of despot-  
ism.

In this new  
age all will be  
uncertain.

The old man-  
ners promoted  
prosperity.

These man-  
ners and

124. But power, of some kind or other, will survive the shock in which manners and opinions perish; and it will find other and worse means for its support. The usurpation which, in order to subvert ancient institutions, has destroyed ancient principles, will hold power by arts similar to those by which it has acquired it. When the old feudal and chivalrous spirit of *fealty*, which, by freeing kings from fear, freed both kings and subjects from the precautions of tyranny, shall be extinct in the minds of men, plots and assassinations will be anticipated by preventive murder and preventive confiscation, and that long roll of grim and bloody maxims, which form the political code of all power, not standing on its own honour, and the honour of those who are to obey it. Kings will be tyrants from policy, when subjects are rebels from principle.

125. When ancient opinions and rules of life are taken away, the loss cannot possibly be estimated. From that moment we have no compass to govern us; nor can we know distinctly to what port we steer. Europe, undoubtedly, taken in a mass, was in a flourishing condition the day on which your Revolution was completed. How much of that prosperous state was owing to the spirit of our old manners and opinions is not easy to say; but as such causes cannot be indifferent in their operation, we must presume that, on the whole, their operation was beneficial.

126. We are but too apt to consider things in the state in which we find them, without sufficiently adverting to the causes by which 40 they have been produced; and possibly may

be upheld. Nothing is more certain than that our manners, our civilisation, and all the good things which are connected with manners and with civilisation, have, in this European world of ours, depended for ages upon two principles ; and were indeed the result of both combined ; I mean the spirit of a gentleman, and the spirit of religion. The nobility and the clergy, the one by profession, the other by patronage, kept learning in existence, even in the midst of arms and confusions, and whilst governments were rather in their causes, than formed. Learning paid back what it received to nobility and to priesthood ; and paid it with usury, by enlarging their ideas, and by furnishing their minds. Happy if they had all continued to know their indissoluble union, and their proper place ! Happy if learning, not debauched by ambition, had been satisfied to continue the instructor, and not aspired to be the master ! Along with its natural protectors and guardians, learning will be cast into the mire, and trodden down under the hoofs of a swinish multitude.<sup>1</sup>

127. If, as I suspect, modern letters owe more than they are always willing to own to ancient manners, so do other interests which we value full as much as they are worth. Even commerce, and trade, and manufacture, the gods of our economical politicians, are themselves perhaps but creatures ; are themselves but effects, which, as first causes, we choose to worship. They certainly grew under the same shade in which learning flourished. They too may decay with their natural protecting principles. With you, for the present at least, they all threaten to disappear together. Where trade and manufactures are wanting to a people, and the spirit of nobility and religion remains,

our advanced civilisation had a double basis.

Two classes  
kept up learning,

10

and were uplifted thereby.

A happy triple union.

20

What will happen.

Even commerce and industry are results of these manners,

30

and may be now undermined.

<sup>1</sup> See the fate of Bailly and Condorcet, supposed to be here particularly alluded to. Compare the circumstances of the trial and execution of the former with this prediction.

If all are lost  
men will revert  
to barbarism.

You seem  
degenerate.

France was  
the home of civi-  
lisation and her  
condition affects  
all nations.

Burke fears  
the effects of a  
revolution in  
manners and  
morals.

sentiment supplies, and not always ill supplies, their place ; but if commerce and the arts should be lost in an experiment to try how well a state may stand without these old fundamental principles, what sort of a thing must be a nation of gross, stupid, ferocious, and, at the same time, poor and sordid barbarians, destitute of religion, honour, or manly pride, possessing nothing at present, and hoping for nothing hereafter ?

I28. I wish you may not be going fast, and by the shortest cut, to that horrible and disgusting situation. Already there appears a poverty of conception, a coarseness and vulgarity, in all the proceedings of the Assembly and of all their instructors. Their liberty is not liberal. Their science is presumptuous ignorance. Their humanity is savage and brutal.

I29. It is not clear, whether in England we learned those grand and decorous principles and manners, of which considerable traces yet remain, from you, or whether you took them from us. But to you, I think, we trace them best. You seem to me to be—*gentis incunabula nostræ*. France has always more or less influenced manners in England ; and when your fountain is choked up and polluted, the stream will not run long, or not run clear, with us, or perhaps with any nation. This gives all Europe, in my opinion, but too close and connected a concern in what is done in France. Excuse me, therefore, if I have dwelt too long on the atrocious spectacle of the 6th of October, 1789, or have given too much scope to the reflections which have arisen in my mind on occasion of the most important of all revolutions, which may be dated from that day, I mean a revolution in sentiments, manners, and moral opinions. As things now stand, with everything respectable destroyed without us, and an attempt to destroy within us every principle of respect, one is almost

forced to apologise for harbouring the common feelings of men.

130. Why do I feel so differently from the Reverend Dr. Price, and those of his lay flock who will choose to adopt the sentiments of his discourse?—For this plain reason—because it is *natural* I should; because we are so made, as to be affected at such spectacles with melancholy sentiments upon the unstable condition of mortal prosperity, and the tremendous uncertainty of human greatness; because in those natural feelings we learn great lessons; because in events like these our passions instruct our reason; because when kings are hurled from their thrones by the Supreme Director of this great drama, and become the objects of insult to the base, and of pity to the good, we behold such disasters in the moral, as we should behold a miracle in the physical, order of things. We are alarmed into reflection; our minds (as it has long since been observed) are purified by terror and pity; our weak, unthinking pride is humbled under the dispensations of a mysterious wisdom. Some tears might be drawn from me, if such a spectacle were exhibited on the stage. I should be truly ashamed of finding in myself that superficial, theatric sense of painted distress, whilst I could exult over it in real life. With such a perverted mind, I could never venture to show my face at a tragedy. People would think the tears that Garrick formerly, or that Siddons not long since, have extorted from me, were the tears of hypocrisy; I should know them to be the tears of folly.

131. Indeed the theatre is a better school of moral sentiments than churches, where the feelings of humanity are thus outraged. Poets who have to deal with an audience not yet graduated in the school of the rights of men, and who must apply themselves to the moral

My sentiments are natural.

10

Unexpected calamities rouse feeling and reflection.

20

A mysterious discipline.

30

The drama instructs more truly.

40

## REFLECTIONS ON

Unprincipled  
teaching is not  
tolerated on the  
stage,

nor cold-blooded  
calculation.

Audiences  
know by intui-  
tion.

Such crimes  
would be judged  
the beginning of  
all evil.

constitution of the heart, would not dare to produce such a triumph as a matter of exultation. There, where men follow their natural impulses, they would not bear the odious maxims of a Machiavelian policy, whether applied to the attainment of monarchical or democratic tyranny. They would reject them on the modern, as they once did on the ancient stage, where they could not bear even the hypothetical proposition of such wickedness in the mouth of a personated tyrant, though suitable to the character he sustained. No theatic audience in Athens would bear what has been borne, in the midst of the real tragedy of this triumphal day; a principal actor weighing, as it were, in scales hung in a shop of horrors,—so much actual crime against so much contingent advantage,—and after putting in and out weights, declaring that the balance was on the side of the advantages. They would not bear to see the crimes of new democracy posted as in a ledger against the crimes of old despotism, and the book-keepers of politics finding democracy still in debt, but by no means unable or unwilling to pay the balance. In the theatre, the first intuitive glance, without any elaborate process of reasoning, would show that this method of political computation would justify every extent of crime. They would see that on these principles, even where the very worst acts were not perpetrated, it was owing rather to the fortune of the conspirators, than to their parsimony in the expenditure of treachery and blood. They would soon see that criminal means once tolerated are soon preferred. They present a shorter cut to the object than through the highway of the moral virtues. Justifying perfidy and murder for public benefit, public benefit would soon become the pretext, and perfidy and murder the end; until rapacity, malice, revenge, and fear

more dreadful than revenge, could satiate their insatiable appetites. Such must be the consequences of losing, in the splendour of these triumphs of the rights of men, all natural sense of wrong and right.

132. But the Reverend Pastor exults in this "leading in triumph," because truly Louis the Sixteenth was "an arbitrary monarch;" that is, in other words, neither more nor less than because he was Louis the Sixteenth, and because he had the misfortune to be born king of France, with the prerogatives of which, a long line of ancestors, and a long acquiescence of the people, without any act of his, had put him in possession. A misfortune it has indeed turned out to him, that he was born king of France. But misfortune is not crime, nor is indiscretion always the greatest guilt. I shall never think that a prince, the acts of whose whole reign was a series of concessions to his subjects, who was willing to relax his authority, to remit his prerogatives, to call his people to a share of freedom, not known, perhaps not desired, by their ancestors; such a prince, though he should be subject to the common frailties attached to men and to princes, though he should have once thought it necessary to provide force against the desperate designs manifestly carrying on against his person and the remnants of his authority; though all this should be taken into consideration, I shall be led with great difficulty to think he deserves the cruel and insulting triumph of Paris and of Dr. Price. I tremble for the cause of liberty, from such an example to kings. I tremble for the cause of humanity, in the unpunished outrages of the most wicked of mankind. But there are some people of that low and degenerate fashion of mind, that they look up with a sort of complacent awe and admiration to kings, 40 who know to keep firm in their seat, to hold a

Price's pretext.

The royal prerogative was not created by Louis xvi.

He made concessions.

An occasion of self-defence.

The example is to be dreaded.

These men  
bow to stern  
kings.

Tyrants should  
be punished;

with severity,

but with dig-  
nity.

Examples, in  
monarchy, o f  
guilt.

If your king  
were guilty he  
ought not to be  
entrusted with  
executive duties.

strict hand over their subjects, to assert their prerogative, and, by the awakened vigilance of a severe despotism, to guard against the very first approaches of freedom. Against such as these they never elevate their voice. Deserters from principle, listed with fortune, they never see any good in suffering virtue, nor any crime in prosperous usurpation.

133. If it could have been made clear to me that the king and queen of France (those I mean who were such before the triumph) were inexorable and cruel tyrants, that they had formed a deliberate scheme for massacring the National Assembly (I think I have seen something like the latter insinuated in certain publications), I should think their captivity just. If this be true, much more ought to have been done, but done, in my opinion, in another manner. The punishment of real tyrants is a noble and awful act of justice; and it has with truth been said to be consolatory to the human mind. But if I were to punish a wicked king, I should regard the dignity in avenging the crime. Justice is grave and decorous, and in its punishments rather seems to submit to a necessity than to make a choice. Had Nero, or Agrippina, or Louis the Eleventh, or Charles the Ninth, been the subject; if Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, after the murder of Patkul, or his predecessor Christina, after the murder of Monaldeschi, had fallen into your hands, Sir, or into mine, I am sure our conduct would have been different.

134. If the French king, or king of the French (or by whatever name he is known in the new vocabulary of your constitution), has in his own person, and that of his queen, really deserved these unavowed, but unavenged, murderous attempts, and those subsequent indignities more cruel than murder, such a person would ill deserve even that subordinate executors

trust which I understand is to be placed in him ; nor is he fit to be called chief in a nation which he has outraged and oppressed. A worse choice for such an office in a new commonwealth, than that of a deposed tyrant, could not possibly be made. But to degrade and insult a man as the worst of criminals, and afterwards to trust him in your highest concerns, as a faithful, honest, and zealous servant, is not consistent with reasoning, nor prudent 10 in policy, nor safe in practice. Those who could make such an appointment must be guilty of a more flagrant breach of trust than any they have yet committed against the people. As this is the only crime in which your leading politicians could have acted inconsistently, I conclude that there is no sort of ground for these horrid insinuations. I think no better of all the other calumnies.

135. In England, we give no credit to them. 20 We are generous enemies : we are faithful allies. We spurn from us with disgust and indignation the slanders of those who bring us their anecdotes with the attestation of the flower-de-luce on their shoulder. We have Lord George Gordon fast in Newgate; and neither his being a public proselyte to Judaism, nor his having, in his zeal against Catholic priests and all sorts of ecclesiastics, raised a mob (excuse the term, it is still in use here) which pulled down all our prisons, have preserved 30 to him a liberty, of which he did not render himself worthy by a virtuous use of it. We have rebuilt Newgate, and tenanted the mansion. We have prisons almost as strong as the Bastile, for those who dare to libel the queens of France. In this spiritual retreat, let the noble libeller remain. Let him there meditate on his Thalmud, until he learns a conduct more becoming his 40 birth and parts, and not so disgraceful to the

Your method  
of degrading and  
entrusting is bad.

It shows that  
the calumnies  
are false.

We scorn foul  
gossip.

The chief  
slanderer is in  
prison

Let him there  
learn wisdom, or

remain till the  
Jews ransom him.

Send us your  
archbishop and  
his funds: they  
will be safe.

In behalf of  
my country I  
disclaim.

I speak from  
experience.

ancient religion to which he has become a proselyte; or until some persons from your side of the water, to please your new Hebrew brethren, shall ransom him. He may then be enabled to purchase, with the old hoards of the synagogue, and a very small poundage, on the long compound interest of the thirty pieces of silver (Dr. Price has shown us what miracles compound interest will perform in 1790 years),  
10 the lands which are lately discovered to have been usurped by the Gallican church. Send us your Popish archbishop of Paris, and we will send you our Protestant Rabbin. We shall treat the person you send us in exchange like a gentleman and an honest man, as he is; but pray let him bring with him the fund of his hospitality, bounty, and charity; and, depend upon it, we shall never confiscate a shilling of that honourable and pious fund, nor think of enriching the treasury with the spoils of the poor-box.  
20

136. To tell you the truth, my dear Sir, I think the honour of our nation to be somewhat concerned in the disclaimer of the proceedings of this society of the Old Jewry and the London Tavern. I have no man's proxy. I speak only for myself, when I disclaim, as I do with all possible earnestness, all communion with the actors in that triumph, or with the admirers of it. When I assert anything else, as concerning the people of England, I speak from observation, not from authority; but I speak from the experience I have had in a pretty extensive and mixed communication with the inhabitants of this kingdom, of all descriptions and ranks, and after a course of attentive observation, begun early in life, and continued for nearly forty years. I have often been astonished, considering that

we are divided from you but by a slender dyke of about twenty-four miles, and that the mutual intercourse between the two countries has lately been very great, to find how little you seem to know of us. I suspect that this is owing to your forming a judgment of this nation from certain publications, which do, very erroneously, if they do at all, represent the opinions and dispositions generally prevalent in England. The vanity, restlessness, petulance, and spirit of intrigue, of several petty cabals, who attempt to hide their total want of consequence in bustle and noise, and puffing, and mutual quotation of each other, makes you imagine that our contemptuous neglect of their abilities is a mark of general acquiescence in their opinions. No such thing, I assure you. Because half-a-dozen grasshoppers under a fern make the field ring with their importunate chink, whilst thousands of great cattle, reposed beneath the shadow of the British oak, chew the cud and are silent, pray do not imagine that those who make the noise are the only inhabitants of the field ; that, of course, they are many in number; or that, after all, they are other than the little, shrivelled, meagre, hopping, though loud and troublesome, insects of the hour.

137. I almost venture to affirm that not one in a hundred amongst us participates in the "triumph" of the Revolution Society. If the king and queen of France, and their children, were to fall into our hands by the chance of war, in the most acrimonious of all hostilities (I deprecate such an event, I deprecate such hostility), they would be treated with another sort of triumphal entry into London. We formerly have had a king of France in that situation ; you have read how he was treated by the victor in the field ; and in what manner he was afterwards received in England. Four

You do not know us;

being deceived by the noisy.

10

20

The people of England do not proclaim themselves.

Chirping insects.

30

Few here agree with Price.

40

Long ago we showed generosity to a French king.

We are still the same.

The great laws of personal and public life remain for ages.

We still cherish natural feelings;

refusing to be sophisticated,

- hundred years have gone over us ; but I believe we are not materially changed since that period. Thanks to our sullen resistance to innovation, thanks to the cold sluggishness of our national character, we still bear the stamp of our fore-fathers. We have not ( as I conceive ) lost the generosity and dignity of thinking of the fourteenth century ; nor as yet have we subtilised ourselves into savages. We are not the converts of Rousseau ; we are not the disciples of Voltaire ; Helvetius has made no progress amongst us. Atheists are not our preachers ; madmen are not our lawgivers. We know that *we* have made no discoveries, and we think that no discoveries are to be made, in morality; nor many in the great principles of government, nor in the ideas of liberty, which were understood long before we were born, altogether as well as they will be after the grave has heaped
- 10 its mould upon our presumption, and the silent tomb shall have imposed its law on our pert loquacity. In England we have not yet been completely embowelled of our natural entrails; we still feel within us, and we cherish and cultivate, those inbred sentiments which are the faithful guardians, the active monitors of our duty, the true supporters of all liberal and manly morals. We have not been drawn and trussed, in order that we may be filled, like
- 20 stuffed birds in a museum, with chaff and rags and paltry blurred shreds of paper about the rights of man. We preserve the whole of our feelings still native and entire, unsophisticated by pedantry and infidelity. We have real hearts of flesh and blood beating in our bosoms. We fear God; we look up with awe to kings ; with affection to parliaments ; with duty to magistrates ; with reverence to priests ; and with respect to nobility.<sup>1</sup> Why? Because when

<sup>1</sup> The English are, I conceive, misrepresented in a letter published in one of the papers, by a gentleman thought to be a dissenting minister.—When

such ideas are brought before our minds, it is *natural* to be so affected; because all other feelings are false and spurious, and tend to corrupt our minds, to vitiate our primary morals, to render us unfit for rational liberty; and by teaching us a servile, licentious, and abandoned insolence, to be our low sport for a few holidays, to make us perfectly fit for, and justly deserving of, slavery, through the whole course of our lives.

138. You see, Sir, that in this enlightened age I am bold enough to confess that we are generally men of untaught feelings; that instead of casting away all our old prejudices, we cherish them to a very considerable degree, and, to take more shame to ourselves, we cherish them because they are prejudices; and the longer they have lasted, and the more generally they have prevailed, the more we cherish them. We are afraid to put men to live and trade each on his own private stock of reason; because we suspect that this stock in each man is small, and that the individuals would do better to avail themselves of the general bank and capital of nations and of ages. Many of our men of speculation, instead of exploding general prejudices, employ their sagacity to discover the latent wisdom which prevails in them. If they find what they seek, and they seldom fail, they think it more wise to continue the prejudice, with the reason involved, than to cast away the coat of prejudice, and to leave nothing but the naked reason; because prejudice, with its reason, has a motive to give action to that reason, and an affection which will give it

knowing that  
a spurious culture  
corrupts and  
enslaves.

10

We maintain  
prejudices,

20

which repre-  
sent general  
wisdom.

There is truth  
within them.

30

Motives and  
affections are  
engaged.

writing to Dr. Price of the spirit which prevails at Paris, he says, "The spirit of the people in this place has abolished all the proud *distinctions* which the king and nobles had usurped in their minds; whether they talk of the king, the noble, or the priest, their whole language is that of the most *enlightened and liberal amongst the English*." If this gentleman means to confine the terms *enlightened and liberal* to one set of men in England, it may be true. It is not generally so.

- Prejudice aids action.
- It unifies life.
- Your men are self-conceited, and are expecting new discoveries.
- They object to permanent institutions, and desire present convenience.
- They consider the king to be bound, but not themselves.
- permanence. Prejudice is of ready application in the emergency; it previously engages the mind in a steady course of wisdom and virtue, and does not leave the man hesitating in the moment of decision, sceptical, puzzled, and unresolved. Prejudice renders a man's virtue his habit; and not a series of unconnected acts. Through just prejudice, his duty becomes a part of his nature.
- 10 139. Your literary men, and your politicians, and so do the whole clan of the enlightened among us, essentially differ in these points. They have no respect for the wisdom of others; but they pay it off by a very full measure of confidence in their own. With them it is a sufficient motive to destroy an old scheme of things, because it is an old one. As to the new, they are in no sort of fear with regard to the duration of a building run up in haste;
- 20 because duration is no object to those who think little or nothing has been done before their time, and who place all their hopes in discovery. They conceive, very systematically, that all things which give perpetuity are mischievous, and therefore they are at inexpiable war with all establishments. They think that government may vary like modes of dress, and with as little ill effect: that there needs no principle of attachment, except a sense of
- 30 present conveniency, to any constitution of the state. They always speak as if they were of opinion that there is a singular species of compact between them and their magistrates, which binds the magistrate, but which has nothing reciprocal in it, but that the majesty of the people has a right to dissolve it without any reason, but its will. Their attachment to their country itself is only so far as it agrees with some of their fleeting projects; it begins and ends with that scheme of polity which falls in with their momentary opinion.

140. These doctrines, or rather sentiments, seem prevalent with your new statesmen. But they are wholly different from those on which we have always acted in this country.

It is quite otherwise in England.

141. I hear it is sometimes given out in France that what is doing among you is after the example of England. I beg leave to affirm that scarcely anything done with you has originated from the practice or the prevalent opinions of this people, either in the act or in the spirit of the proceeding. Let me add, that we are as unwilling to learn these lessons from France, as we are sure that we never taught them to that nation. The cabals here, who take a sort of share in your transactions, as yet consist of but a handful of people. If unfortunately by their intrigues, their sermons, their publications, and by a confidence derived from an expected union with the counsels and forces of the French nation, they should draw considerable numbers into their faction, and in consequence should seriously attempt anything here in imitation of what has been done with you, the event, I dare venture to prophesy, will be, that, with some trouble to their country, they will soon accomplish their own destruction. This people refused to change their law in remote ages from respect to the infallibility of popes; and they will not now alter it from a pious implicit faith in the dogmatism of philosophers; though the former was armed with the anathema and crusade, and though the latter should act with the libel and the lamp-iron.

It is wrong to claim a British precedent.

10

Nor will we follow you.

20

If any try they will find ruin.

30

We reject all dogmatists, however armed.

40

Hitherto our concern was indirect.

142. Formerly your affairs were your own concern only. We felt for them as men; but we kept aloof from them, because we were not citizens of France. But when we see the model held up to ourselves, we must feel as Englishmen, and feeling, we must provide as Englishmen. Your affairs, in spite of us, are made a

If your model  
is pressed on us  
we will treat it  
as a plague.

The credit is  
claimed by your  
philosophers.

Such a party  
is not known  
here.

Are they the  
infidels?

Our Free-  
thinkers are now  
forgotten.

But they were  
individuals, and  
not a cabal.

And they had  
no influence on  
our constitution.

part of our interest; so far at least as to keep at a distance your panacea, or your plague. If it be a panacea, we do not want it. We know the consequences of unnecessary physic. If it be a plague, it is such a plague that the precautions of the most severe quarantine ought to be established against it.

- I43. I hear on all hands that a cabal, calling itself philosophic, receives the glory of many of the late proceedings ; and that their opinions and systems are the true actuating spirit of the whole of them. I have heard of no party in England, literary or political, at any time, known by such a description. It is not with you composed of those men, is it ? whom the vulgar, in their blunt, homely style, commonly call atheists and infidels ? If it be, I admit that we too have had writers of that description, who made some noise in their day.
- 20 At present they repose in lasting oblivion. Who, born within the last forty years, has read one word of Collins, and Toland, and Tindal, and Chubb, and Morgan, and that whole race who called themselves Freethinkers ? Who now reads Bolingbroke ? Who ever read him through ? Ask the booksellers of London what is become of all these lights of the world. In as few years their few successors will go to the family vault of "all the Capulets." But whatever they
- 30 were, or are, with us, they were and are wholly unconnected individuals. With us they kept the common nature of their kind, and were not gregarious. They never acted in corps, or were known as a faction in the state, nor presumed to influence in that name or character, or for the purposes of such a faction, on any of our public concerns. Whether they ought so to exist, and so be permitted to act, is another question. As such cabals have not
- 40 existed in England, so neither has the spirit of them had any influence in establishing the

original frame of our constitution, or in any one of the several reparations and improvements it has undergone. The whole has been done under the auspices, and is confirmed by the sanctions, of religion and piety. The whole has emanated from the simplicity of our national character, and from a sort of native plainness and directness of understanding, which for a long time characterised those men who have successively obtained authority amongst us. This disposition still remains; at least in the great body of the people.

Our founders  
were pious;

and they cor-  
responded with  
our national  
character.

144. We know, and what is better, we feel inwardly, that religion is the basis of civil society, and the source of all good and of all comfort.<sup>1</sup> In England we are so convinced of this, that there is no rust of superstition, with which the accumulated absurdity of the human mind might have crusted it over in the course of ages, that ninety-nine in a hundred of the people of England would not prefer to impiety. We shall never be such fools as to call in an enemy to the substance of any system to remove its corruptions, to supply its defects, or to perfect its construction. If our religious tenets should ever want a further elucidation, we shall not call on atheism to explain them. We shall not light up our temple from that unhallowed fire. It will be illuminated with other lights. It will be perfumed with other incense than the infectious stuff which is imported by the smugglers of adulterated metaphysics. If our ecclesiastical establishment should want a revision, it is not avarice or rapacity, public or private, that we shall employ for the audit, or receipt, or application of its consecrated revenue.

Religion is  
the basis o f  
society.

We prefer  
superstition t o  
irreligion.

We will not  
allow atheists to  
improve religion,

30

nor avaricious  
men to revise an  
establishment.

<sup>1</sup> Sit igitur hoc ab initio persuasum civibus, dominos esse omnium rerum ac moderatores, deos; eaque, quæ gerantur, eorum geri vi, ditione, ac numine; eosdemque optime de genere hominum mereri; et qualis quisque sit, quid agat, quid in se admittat, qua mente, qua pietate colat religiones intueri; piorum et impiorum habere rationem. His enim rebus imbutæ mentes haud sane abhorrebunt ab utili et a vera sententia—Cic. *De Legibus* 1, 2.

We are convinced Protestants.

Man is by nature religious.

If in madness we set aside Christianity, something ignoble will take its place.

Before we disestablish we wish to know the alternative.

There are four chief establishments. We wish each to remain as it is.

Violently condemning neither the Greek nor the Armenian, nor, since heats are subsided, the Roman system of religion, we prefer the Protestant ; not because we think it has less of the Christian religion in it, but because, in our judgment, it has more. We are Protestants, not from indifference, but from zeal.

I45. We know, and it is our pride to know, that man is by his constitution a religious animal ; that atheism is against, not only our reason, but our instincts ; and that it cannot prevail long. But if, in the moment of riot, and in a drunken delirium from the hot spirit drawn out of the alembic of hell, which in France is now so furiously boiling, we should uncover our nakedness, by throwing off that Christian religion which has hitherto been our boast and comfort, and one great source of civilisation amongst us, and among many other nations, we are

I0 apprehensive (being well aware that the mind will not endure a void) that some uncouth, pernicious, and degrading superstition might take the place of it.

I46. For that reason, before we take from our establishment the natural, human means of estimation, and give it up to contempt, as you have done, and in doing it have incurred the penalties you well deserve to suffer, we desire that some other may be presented to us in the place of it. We shall then form our judgment.

I47. On these ideas, instead of quarrelling with establishments, as some do, who have made a philosophy and a religion of their hostility to such institutions, we cleave closely to them. We are resolved to keep an established church, an established monarchy, an established aristocracy, and an established democracy, each in the degree it exists, and in ~~so~~

greater. I shall show you presently how much of each of these we possess.

148. It has been the misfortune (not, as these gentlemen think it, the glory) of this age that everything is to be discussed, as if the constitution of our country were to be always a subject rather of altercation than enjoyment. For this reason, as well as for the satisfaction of those among you (if any such you have among you) who may wish to profit of examples, I venture to trouble you with a few thoughts upon each of these establishments. I do not think they were unwise in ancient Rome, who, when they wished to new-model their laws, sent commissioners to examine the best constituted republics within their reach.

Discussion is  
an evil of our  
time.

10

Hence, and to  
show you exam-  
ples, I shall  
expound.

You, like the  
ancient Romans,  
will do well to  
take note.

149. First, I beg leave to speak of our church establishment, which is the first of our prejudices, not a prejudice destitute of reason, but involving in it profound and extensive wisdom. I speak of it first. It is first, and last, and midst in our minds. For, taking ground on that religious system, of which we are now in possession, we continue to act on the early received and uniformly continued sense of mankind. That sense not only, like a wise architect, hath built up the august fabric of states, but like a provident proprietor, to preserve the structure from profanation and ruin, as a sacred temple purged from all the impurities of fraud, and violence, and injustice, and tyranny, hath solemnly and for ever consecrated the commonwealth, and all that officiate in it. This consecration is made, that all who administer in the government of men, in which they stand in the person of God himself, should have high and worthy notions of their function and

First the  
Church Estab-  
lishment,

20  
which is prior  
in importance to  
Monarchy and  
the rest.

Human in-  
stinct which has  
built states has  
also consecrated  
them :

30  
that states-  
men might be  
grave,

conscious both  
of the greatness  
of their office  
and of a future  
life.

An establish-  
ed church pre-  
serves and  
strengthens such  
ideas.

All aids are  
needed to con-  
nect the human  
with the Divine,  
and ensure the  
greatness of man.

Statesmen  
need most.

But all who  
have any share  
of power special-  
ly need it;

so as to learn  
that public duty  
is a trust.

destination; that their hope should be full of immortality; that they should not look to the paltry pelf of the moment, nor to the temporary and transient praise of the vulgar, but to a solid, permanent existence, in the permanent part of their nature, and to a permanent fame and glory, in the example they leave as a rich inheritance to the world.

150. Such sublime principles ought to be infused into persons of exalted situations; and religious establishments provided, that may continually revive and enforce them. Every sort of moral, every sort of civil, every sort of politic institution, aiding the rational and natural ties that connect the human understanding and affections to the divine, are not more than necessary, in order to build up that wonderful structure, Man; whose prerogative it is, to be in a great degree a creature of his own making; and who, 20 when made as he ought to be made, is destined to hold no trivial place in the creation. But whenever man is put over men, as the better nature ought ever to preside, in that case more particularly, he should as nearly as possible be approximated to his perfection.

151. This consecration of the state, by a state religious establishment, is necessary also to operate with a wholesome awe upon free citizens; because, in order to secure their freedom, they must enjoy some determinate portion of power. To them therefore a religion connected with the state, and with their duty towards it, becomes even more necessary than in such societies, where the people, by the terms of their subjection, are confined to private sentiments, and the management of their own family concerns. All persons possessing any portion of power ought to be strongly and awfully impressed with an idea that they act in trust: 30 and that they are to account for their conduct

in that trust to the one great Master, Author, and Founder of society.

I52. This principle ought even to be more strongly impressed upon the minds of those who compose the collective sovereignty, than upon those of single princes. Without instruments, these princes can do nothing. Whoever uses instruments, in finding helps, finds also impediments. Their power is therefore by no means complete; nor are they safe in extreme abuse. 10

Such persons, however elevated by flattery, arrogance, and self-opinion, must be sensible that, whether covered or not by positive law, in some way or other they are accountable even here for the abuse of their trust. If they are not cut off by a rebellion of their people, they may be strangled by the very janissaries kept for their security against all other rebellion. Thus we have seen the king of France sold by his soldiers for an increase of pay. But where 20

popular authority is absolute and unrestrained, the people have an infinitely greater, because a far better founded, confidence in their own power. They are themselves, in a great measure, their own instruments. They are nearer to their objects. Besides, they are less under responsibility to one of the greatest controlling powers on earth, the sense of fame and estimation. The share of infamy, that is likely to fall to the lot of each individual in public 30

acts, is small indeed; the operation of opinion being in the inverse ratio to the number of those who abuse power. Their own approbation of their own acts has to them the appearance of a public judgment in their favour. A perfect democracy is therefore the most shameless thing in the world. As it is the most shameless, it is also the most fearless. No man apprehends in his person that he can be made subject to punishment. Certainly the people at large never ought: for as all punishments

Even more  
needed by a rul-  
ing people than  
by a king.

Kings are  
more limited and  
responsible.

Dangers are  
manifold.

But a ruling  
people are less  
impeded in exe-  
cution, and  
less responsible  
to opinion.

Pure demo-  
cracy is without  
shame or fear.

As they cannot be punished they ought to be impressed with principles of right;

and warned against tyranny or caprice,

in the interests both of ministers and people.

When the people are freed from selfishness and caprice,

and learn the oneness of will and reason,

are for example towards the conservation of the people at large, the people at large can never become the subject of punishment by any human hand.<sup>1</sup> It is therefore of infinite importance that they should not be suffered to imagine that their will, any more than that of kings,

- is the standard of right and wrong. They ought to be persuaded that they are full as little entitled, and far less qualified, with safety to themselves, to use any arbitrary power whatsoever; that therefore they are not, under a false show of liberty, but in truth, to exercise an unnatural, inverted domination, tyrannically to exact, from those who officiate in the state, not an entire devotion to their interest, which is their right, but an abject submission to their occasional will; extinguishing thereby, in all those who serve them, all moral principle, all sense of dignity, all use of judgment, and all consistency of character; whilst by the very same process they give themselves up a proper, a suitable, but a most contemptible prey to the servile ambition of popular sycophants, or courtly flatterers.

- 153. When the people have emptied themselves of all the lust of selfish will, which without religion it is utterly impossible they ever should, when they are conscious that they exercise, and exercise perhaps in a higher link of the order of delegation, the power, which to be legitimate must be according to that eternal, immutable law, in which will and reason are the same, they will be more careful how they place power in base and incapable hands. In their nomination to office, they will not appoint to the exercise of authority, as to a pitiful job, but as to a holy function; not according to their sordid, selfish interest, nor to their wanton caprice, nor to their arbitrary will; but they will

<sup>1</sup> Quicquid multis peccatur inultem.

confer that power (which any man may well tremble to give or to receive) on those only in whom they may discern that predominant proportion of active virtue and wisdom, taken together and fitted to the charge, such, as in the great and inevitable mixed mass of human imperfections and infirmities, is to be found.

154. When they are habitually convinced that no evil can be acceptable, either in the act or the permission, to him whose essence is good, they will be better able to extirpate out of the minds of all magistrates, civil, ecclesiastical, or military, anything that bears the least resemblance to a proud and lawless domination.

155. But one of the first and most leading principles on which the commonwealth and the laws are consecrated, is lest the temporary possessors and life-renters in it, unmindful of what they have received from their ancestors, or of what is due to their posterity, should act as if they were the entire masters; that they should not think it among their rights to cut off the entail, or commit waste on the inheritance, by destroying at their pleasure the whole original fabric of their society; hazarding to leave to those who come after them a ruin instead of a habitation—and teaching these successors as little to respect their contrivances, as they had themselves respected the institutions of their forefathers. By this unprincipled facility of changing the state as often, and as much, and in as many ways, as there are floating fancies or fashions, the whole chain and continuity of the commonwealth would be broken. No one generation could link with the other. Men would become little better than the flies of a summer.

156. And first of all, the science of jurisprudence, the pride of the human intellect, which, with all its defects, redundancies, and errors, is the collected reason of ages. combining

then they will select as ministers the men foremost in active and suitable wisdom and virtue.

When they learn the character of essential good they will be able to prevent tyranny.

First they must learn that the present is but a link;

that they hold an inheritance for the well-being of the future.

Institutions must be respected.

Facile change destroys continuity and makes men insignificant.

Evil effects of frequent change:

Universal law would yield to personal presumption;

no fixed course would be possible;

education could have no sure goal;

habits would lack principles;

a well-trained young man might find himself unfitted for the world;

keenness of honour could not survive the loss of fixed standards;

the greater arts would decay;

and the state would soon perish.

the principles of original justice with the infinite variety of human concerns, as a heap of old exploded errors, would be no longer studied. Personal self-sufficiency and arrogance (the certain attendants upon all those who have never experienced a wisdom greater than their own) would usurp the tribunal. Of course no certain laws, establishing invariable grounds of hope and fear, would keep the

10 actions of men in a certain course, or direct them to a certain end. Nothing stable in the modes of holding property, or exercising function, could form a solid ground on which any parent could speculate in the education of his offspring, or in a choice for their future establishment in the world. No principles would be early worked into the habits. As soon as the most able instructor had completed his laborious course of institution, instead of

20 sending forth his pupil, accomplished in a virtuous discipline, fitted to procure him attention and respect, in his place in society, he would find everything altered; and that he had turned out a poor creature to the contempt and derision of the world, ignorant of the true grounds of estimation. Who would ensure a tender and delicate sense of honour to beat almost with the first pulses of the heart, when no man could know what would be the test of honour in a

30 nation, continually varying the standard of its coin? No part of life would retain its acquisitions. Barbarism with regard to science and literature, unskilfulness with regard to arts and manufactures, would infallibly succeed to the want of a steady education and settled principle; and thus the commonwealth itself would, in a few generations, crumble away, be disconnected into the dust and powder of individuality, and at length dispersed to all the winds of heaven.

40 157. To avoid therefore the evils of inconstancy and versatility, ten thousand times

worse than those of obstinacy and the blindest prejudice, we have consecrated the state, that no man should approach to look into its defects or corruptions but with due caution ; that he should never dream of beginning its reformation by its subversion ; that he should approach to the faults of the state as to the wounds of a father, with pious awe and trembling solicitude. By this wise prejudice we are taught to look with horror on those children of their country who are prompt rashly to hack that aged parent in pieces, and put him into the kettle of magicians, in hopes that by their poisonous weeds, and wild incantations, they may regenerate the paternal constitution, and renovate their father's life.

10

To prevent such things the State is consecrated,

so as to be an object of pious and filial reverence.

158. Society is indeed a contract. Subordinate contracts for objects of mere occasional interest may be dissolved at pleasure—but the state ought not to be considered as nothing better than a partnership agreement in a trade of pepper and coffee, calico or tobacco, or some other such low concern, to be taken up for a little temporary interest, and to be dissolved by the fancy of the parties. It is to be looked on with other reverence ; because it is not a partnership in things subservient only to the gross animal existence of a temporary and perishable nature. It is a partnership in all science ; a partnership in all art ; a partnership in every virtue, and in all perfection. As the ends of such a partnership cannot be obtained in many generations, it becomes a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born. Each contract of each particular state is but a clause in the great primæval contract of eternal society, linking the lower with the higher natures, connecting the visible and invisible world, according to a fixed compact sanctioned b

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Explanation of the statement that Society is a contract;

not a partnership in business only,

30

but in all products of mind, and attainments of character ;

and it includes past and future.

One nation's life is but a clause.

The visible and invisible are bound together by the law of the Eternal.

This law is above all human will.

Nations dare not depart from it.

Necessity alone justifies revolution,

such necessity as is part of the eternal order.

A revolution due to choice belongs to the world of madness.

Such sentiments are held here by the thoughtful few,

and accepted by the many;

the inviolable oath which holds all physical and all moral natures, each in their appointed place. This law is not subject to the will of those who, by an obligation above them, and infinitely superior, are bound to submit their will to that law. The municipal corporations of that universal kingdom are not morally at liberty at their pleasure, and on their speculations of a contingent improvement, wholly to

10 separate and tear asunder the bands of their subordinate community, and to dissolve it into an unsocial, uncivil, unconnected chaos of elementary principles. It is the first and supreme necessity only, a necessity that is not chosen, but chooses, a necessity paramount to deliberation, that admits no discussion, and demands no evidence, which alone can justify a resort to anarchy. This necessity is no exception to the rule ; because this necessity itself is a

20 part too of that moral and physical disposition of things, to which man must be obedient by consent or force : but if that which is only submission to necessity should be made the object of choice, the law is broken, nature is disobeyed, and the rebellious are outlawed, cast forth, and exiled, from this world of reason, and order, and peace, and virtue, and fruitful penitence, into the antagonist world of madness, discord, vice, confusion, and unavailing sorrow.

30 159. These, my dear Sir, are, were, and, I think, long will be, the sentiments of not the least learned and reflecting part of this kingdom. They who are included in this description form their opinions on such grounds as such persons ought to form them. The less inquiring receive them from an authority, which those whom Providence dooms to live on trust need not be ashamed to rely on. These two sorts of men move in the same direction, though in a different place. They both move with the order of the universe.

They all know or feel this great ancient truth: "Quod illi principi et præpotenti Deo qui omnem hunc mundum regit, nihil eorum quæ quidem fiant in terris acceptius quam concilia et cœtus hominum jure sociati quæ civitates appellantur." They take this tenet of the head and heart, not from the great name which it immediately bears, nor from the greater from whence it is derived; but from that which alone can give true weight and sanction to any learned opinion, the common nature and common relation of men. Persuaded that all things ought to be done with reference, and referring all to the point of reference to which all should be directed, they think themselves bound, not only as individuals in the sanctuary of the heart, or as congregated in that personal capacity, to renew the memory of their high origin and cast; but also in their corporate character to perform their national homage to the institutor, and author, and protector of civil society; without which civil society man could not by any possibility arrive at the perfection of which his nature is capable, nor even make a remote and faint approach to it. They conceive that He who gave our nature to be perfected by our virtue, willed also the necessary means of its perfection.—He willed therefore the state—He willed its connection with the source and original archetype of all perfection. They who are convinced of this his will, which is the law of laws, and the sovereign of sovereigns, cannot think it reprehensible that this our corporate fealty and homage, that this our recognition of a signiority paramount, I had almost said this oblation of the state itself, as a worthy offering on the high altar of universal praise, should be performed as all public, solemn acts are performed, in buildings, in music, in decoration, in speech, in the dignity of persons,

the social order being regarded as Divine,

and in accordance with the nature and relationships of man.

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Both as individuals and as a State we render homage to God, the Author of Society which is necessary to our perfection.

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God decreed the State and its dependence on Him and His will.

30

That will is alone supreme.

40

Our national worship and self-

oblation should be as noble as man can make it.

Therefore an expensive establishment is proper.

The ends are high.

The poor are encouraged,

and directed to the hope of a higher state.

These are long-established opinions, gathered as much as meditated.

Most of us think an establishment of religion obligatory;

hence occasional injustice to Dissenters.

according to the customs of mankind, taught by their nature; this is, with modest splendour and unassuming state, with mild majesty and sober pomp. For those purposes they think some part of the wealth of the country is as usefully employed as it can be in fomenting the luxury of individuals. It is the public ornament. It is the public consolation. It nourishes the public hope. The poorest man finds his own importance and dignity in it, whilst the wealth and pride of individuals at every moment makes the man of humble rank and fortune sensible of his inferiority, and degrades and vilifies his condition. It is for the man in humble life, and to raise his nature, and to put him in mind of a state in which the privileges of opulence will cease, when he will be equal by nature, and may be more than equal by virtue, that this portion of 20 the general wealth of his country is employed and sanctified.

160. I assure you I do not aim at singularity. I give you opinions which have been accepted amongst us, from very early times to this moment, with a continued and general approbation, and which indeed are so worked into my mind, that I am unable to distinguish what I have learned from others from the results of my own meditation.

30 161. It is on some such principles that the majority of the people of England, far from thinking a religious national establishment unlawful, hardly think it lawful to be without one. In France you are wholly mistaken if you do not believe us above all other things attached to it, and beyond all other nations; and when this people has acted unwisely and unjustifiably in its favour (as in some instances they have done most certainly), in their very errors 40 you will at least discover their zeal.

162. This principle runs through the whole system of their polity. They do not consider their church establishment as convenient, but as essential to their state; not as a thing heterogeneous and separable; something added for accommodation; what they may either keep or lay aside, according to their temporary ideas of convenience. They consider it as the foundation of their whole constitution, with which, and with every part of which, it holds an indissoluble union. Church and state are ideas inseparable in their minds, and scarcely is the one ever mentioned without mentioning the other.

The principle fundamental and all-pervading;

church and State being regarded as one whole.

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163. Our education is so formed as to confirm and fix this impression. Our education is in a manner wholly in the hands of ecclesiastics, and in all stages from infancy to manhood. Even when our youth, leaving schools and universities, enter that most important period of life which begins to link experience and study together, and when with that view they visit other countries, instead of old domestics whom we have seen as governors to principal men from other parts, three-fourths of those who go abroad with our young nobility and gentlemen are ecclesiastics; not as austere masters, nor as mere followers; but as friends and companions of a graver character, and not seldom persons as well born as themselves. With them, as relations, they most constantly keep up a close connection through life. By this connection we conceive that we attach our gentlemen to the church; and we liberalise the church by an intercourse with the leading characters of the country.

The system of education seals these opinions.

Churchmen are our teachers.

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Young men on travel take clergymen as guides.

30

The church in turn is liberalised.

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These methods existed before the Reformation,

164. So tenacious are we of the old ecclesiastical modes and fashions of institution, that very little alteration has been made in them since the fourteenth or fifteenth century: adhering in this particular, as in all things else, to

and are preserved with enlargement and adaptation.

On this basis we have won a full share in discovery and in permanent literature.

Hence the Church has not to depend on voluntary contributions.

Nor are stipends dependent on Government.

The clergy are financially independent.

40

our old settled maxim, never entirely nor at once to depart from antiquity. We found these old institutions, on the whole, favourable to morality and discipline ; and we thought they were susceptible of amendment, without altering the ground. We thought that they were capable of receiving and meliorating, and above all of preserving, the accessions of science and literature, as the order of Providence

10 should successively produce them. And after all, with this Gothic and monkish education (for such it is in the ground-work), we may put in our claim to as ample and as early a share in all the improvements in science, in arts, and in literature, which have illuminated and adorned the modern world, as any other nation in Europe : we think one main cause of this improvement was our not despising the patrimony of knowledge which was left us by  
20 our forefathers.

I65. It is from our attachment to a church establishment that the English nation did not think it wise to intrust that great, fundamental interest of the whole to what they trust no part of their civil or military public service, that is, to the unsteady and precarious contribution of individuals. They go further. They certainly never have suffered, and never will suffer, the fixed estate of the church to be converted into a pension, to depend on the treasury, and to be delayed, withheld, or perhaps to be extinguished, by fiscal difficulties : which difficulties may sometimes be pretended for political purposes, and are in fact often brought on by the extravagance, negligence, and rapacity of politicians. The people of England think that they have constitutional motives, as well as religious, against any project of turning their independent clergy into ecclesiastical pensioners of state. They tremble for their liberty, from the influence of a clergy

dependent on the crown ; they tremble for the public tranquillity from the disorders of a factious clergy, if it were made to depend upon any other than the crown. They therefore made their church, like their king and their nobility, independent.

166. From the united considerations of religion and constitutional policy, from their opinion of a duty to make sure provision for the consolation of the feeble and the instruction of the ignorant, they have incorporated and identified the estate of the church with the mass of *private property*, of which the state is not the proprietor, either for use or dominion, but the guardian only and the regulator. They have ordained that the provision of this establishment might be as stable as the earth on which it stands, and should not fluctuate with the Euripus of funds and actions.

167. The men of England, the men, I mean, of light and leading in England, whose wisdom (if they have any) is open and direct, would be ashamed, as of a silly, deceitful trick, to profess any religion in name which, by their proceedings, they appear to contemn. If by their conduct (the only language that rarely lies) they seemed to regard the great ruling principle of the moral and the natural world as a mere invention to keep the vulgar in obedience, they apprehend that by such a conduct they would defeat the politic purpose they have in view. They would find it difficult to make others believe in a system to which they manifestly gave no credit themselves. The Christian statesmen of this land would indeed first provide for the *multitude*; because it is the *multitude*; and is therefore, as such, the first object in the ecclesiastical institution, and in all institutions. They have been taught that the circumstance of the gospel's being preached to the poor, was one of the great tests of its

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The Church revenues are held as private property which the State must guard.

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Our leaders would not profess a religion and then treat it lightly.

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If they acted as if regarding religion as a device for making the masses submissive, they know that the action would be vain.

40

They do indeed provide for the masses, as a fundamental duty;

but they know also the equal or greater needs of the rich;

in view of the sin and pride and ignorance and influence of courtiers.

The rich need not only instruction but also consolation.

They are often miserable,

full of anxieties,

empty in mind,

- true mission. They think, therefore, that those do not believe it who do not take care it should be preached to the poor. But as they know that charity is not confined to any one description, but ought to apply itself to all men who have wants, they are not deprived of a due and anxious sensation of pity to the distresses of the miserable great. They are not repelled through a fastidious delicacy, at the stench of
- 10 their arrogance and presumption, from a medicinal attention to their mental blotches and running sores. They are sensible that religious instruction is of more consequence to them than to any others; from the greatness of the temptation to which they are exposed; from the important consequences that attend their faults; from the contagion of their ill example; from the necessity of bowing down the stubborn neck of their pride and ambition to the yoke of
- 20 moderation and virtue; from a consideration of the fat stupidity and gross ignorance concerning what imports men most to know, which prevails at courts, and at the head of armies, and in senates, as much as at the loom and in the field.
168. The English people are satisfied that to the great the consolations of religion are as necessary as its instructions. They too are among the unhappy. They feel personal pain
- 30 and domestic sorrow. In these they have no privilege, but are subject to pay their full contingent to the contributions levied on mortality. They want this sovereign balm under their gnawing cares and anxieties, which, being less conversant about the limited wants of animal life, range without limit, and are diversified by infinite combinations, in the wild and unbounded regions of imagination. Some charitable dole is wanting to these, our often
- 40 very unhappy brethren, to fill the gloomy void that reigns in minds which have nothing on

earth to hope or fear; something to relieve in the killing languor and over-laboured lassitude of those who have nothing to do; something to excite an appetite to existence in the palled satiety which attends on all pleasures which may be bought, where nature is not left to her own process, where even desire is anticipated, and therefore fruition defeated by meditated schemes and contrivances of delight; and no interval, no obstacle, is interposed between the 10 wish and the accomplishment.

169. The people of England know how little influence the teachers of religion are likely to have with the wealthy and powerful of long standing, and how much less with the newly fortunate, if they appear in a manner no way assorted to those with whom they must associate, and over whom they must even exercise, in some cases, something like an authority. What must they think of that body of teachers, if they 20 see it in no part above the establishment of their domestic servants? If the poverty were voluntary, there might be some difference. Strong instances of self-denial operate powerfully on our minds; and a man who has no wants has obtained great freedom and firmness, and even dignity. But as the mass of any description of men are but men, and their poverty cannot be voluntary, that disrespect, which attends upon all lay poverty, will not 30 depart from the ecclesiastical. Our provident constitution has therefore taken care that those who are to instruct presumptuous ignorance, those who are to be censors over insolent vice, should neither incur their contempt nor live upon their alms; nor will it tempt the rich to a neglect of the true medicine of their minds. For these reasons, whilst we provide first for the poor, and with a parental solicitude, we have not relegated religion (like something we were 40 ashamed to show) to obscure municipalities or

wearied with idleness,

satiated with pleasures and sick of life.

Religious teachers must be socially the equals of such men.

Voluntary poverty is in individual cases effective, but general poverty would diminish respect.

The teachers of the proud are independent of them, and the teachers of the poor are not under local jurisdictions.

Our bishops occupy the highest places; and clergymen mix with all classes.

Englishmen honour the ministers of religion.

Great salaries allow large charities;

and the freedom of use is a useful discipline.

Property is an inviolable possession.

rustic villages. No! we will have her to exalt her mitred front in courts and parliaments. We will have her mixed throughout the whole mass of life, and blended with all the classes of society. The people of England will show to the haughty potentates of the world, and to their talking sophisters, that a free, a generous, an informed nation honours the high magistrates of its church; that it will not suffer the insolence of wealth and titles, or any other species of proud pretension, to look down with scorn upon what they look up to with reverence; nor presume to trample on that acquired personal nobility, which they intend always to be, and which often is, the fruit, not the reward (for what can be the reward?), of learning, piety, and virtue. They can see, without pain or grudging, an archbishop precede a duke. They can see a bishop of Durham, or a bishop of 10 Winchester, in possession of ten thousand pounds a year; and cannot conceive why it is in worse hands than estates to the like amount in the hands of this earl or that squire; although it may be true, that so many dogs and horses are not kept by the former, and fed with the victuals which ought to nourish the children of the people. It is true the whole church revenue is not always employed, and to every shilling, in charity; nor perhaps ought it; but something 20 is generally so employed. It is better to cherish virtue and humanity, by leaving much to free will, even with some loss to the object, than to attempt to make men mere machines and instruments of a political benevolence. The world on the whole will gain by a liberty, without which virtue cannot exist.

I70. When once the commonwealth has established the estates of the church as property, it can, consistently, hear nothing of the more

or the less. Too much and too little are treason against property. What evil can arise from the quantity in any hand, whilst the supreme authority has the full, sovereign superintendence over this, as over all property, to prevent every species of abuse; and, whenever it notably deviates, to give to it a direction agreeable to the purposes of its institution.

171. In England most of us conceive that it is envy and malignity towards those who are often the beginners of their own fortune, and not a love of the self-denial and mortification of the ancient church, that makes some look askance at the distinctions, and honours, and revenues which, taken from no person, are set apart for virtue. The ears of the people of England are distinguishing. They hear these men speak broad. Their tongue betrays them. Their language is in the *patois* of fraud; in the cant and gibberish of hypocrisy. The people of England must think so, when these praters affect to carry back the clergy to that primitive, evangelic poverty which, in the spirit, ought always to exist in them (and in us too, however we may like it), but in the thing must be varied, when the relation of that body to the state is altered; when manners, when modes of life, when indeed the whole order of human affairs, has undergone a total revolution. We shall believe those reformers then to be honest enthusiasts, not, as now we think them, cheats and deceivers, when we see them throwing their own goods into common, and submitting their own persons to the austere discipline of the early church.

172. With these ideas rooted in their minds, the Commons of Great Britain, in the national emergencies, will never seek their resource from the confiscation of the estates of the church and poor. Sacrilege and proscription are not among the ways and means of our

The Legislature has power to deal with abuses.

Those that condemn the wealth of the clergy are envious hypocrites.

Poverty of spirit should exist always.

External circumstances vary with times.

They that censure the clergy should themselves surrender their goods.

Our Commons will not confiscate church property.

They unanimously repudiate your Assembly's policy.

Your sympathisers are disappointed.

Our people are roused by your robberies;

they now understand the new reformers,

and are on their guard.

We will not rob one fellow-citizen.

Your men are tyrants, and inhuman.

committee of supply. The Jews in Change Alley have not yet dared to hint their hopes of a mortgage on the revenues belonging to the see of Canterbury. I am not afraid that I shall be disavowed, when I assure you that there is not *one* public man in this kingdom whom you would wish to quote, no not one, of any party or description, who does not reprobate the dishonest, perfidious, and cruel confiscation which the National Assembly has been compelled to make of that property, which it was their first duty to protect.

173. It is with the exultation of a little national pride I tell you, that those amongst us who have wished to pledge the societies of Paris in the cup of their abominations have been disappointed. The robbery of your church has proved a security to the possessions of ours. It has roused the people. They see with horror and alarm that enormous and shameless act of proscription. It has opened, and will more and more open, their eyes upon the selfish enlargement of mind, and the narrow liberality of sentiment of insidious men, which, commencing in close hypocrisy and fraud, have ended in open violence and rapine. At home we behold similar beginnings. We are on our guard against similar conclusions.

174. I hope we shall never be so totally lost to all sense of the duties imposed upon us by the law of social union, as, upon any pretext of public service, to confiscate the goods of a single unoffending citizen. Who but a tyrant (a name expressive of everything which can vitiate and degrade human nature) could think of seizing on the property of men, unaccused, unheard, untried, by whole descriptions, by hundreds and thousands together? Who, that had not lost every trace of humanity, could think of casting down men of exalted rank and sacred function, some of them of an age to call

at once for reverence and compassion, of casting them down from the highest situation in the commonwealth, wherein they were maintained by their own landed property, to a state of indigence, depression, and contempt?

175. The confiscators truly have made some allowance to their victims from the scraps and fragments of their own tables, from which they have been so harshly driven, and which have been so bountifully spread for a feast to the harpies of usury. But to drive men from independence to live on alms, is itself great cruelty. That which might be a tolerable condition to men in one state of life, and not habituated to other things, may, when all these circumstances are altered, be a dreadful revolution; and one to which a virtuous mind would feel pain in condemning any guilt, except that which would demand the life of the offender. But to many minds this punishment of *degradation* and *infamy* is worse than death. Undoubtedly it is an infinite aggravation of this cruel suffering, that the persons who were taught a double prejudice in favour of religion, by education, and by the place they held in the administration of its functions, are to receive the remnants of their property as alms from the profane and impious hands of those who had plundered them of all the rest; to receive (if they are at all to receive) not from the charitable contributions of the faithful, but from the insolent tenderness of known and avowed atheism, the maintenance of religion, measured out to them on the standard of the contempt in which it is held; and for the purpose of rendering those who receive the allowance vile, and of no estimation, in the eyes of mankind.

176. But this act of seizure of property, it seems, is a judgment in law, and not a confiscation. They have, it seems, found out in the academies of the *Palais Royal*, and the *Jacobins*,

They offer  
scraps of salaries  
from the confis-  
cated property.

The change is  
cruel,

20 and is felt as  
degradation;

30 much more  
because their  
portion is assign-  
ed by impious  
men,

and is meant  
to make them  
less esteemed.

40 It is pretend-  
ed that all this  
is legal;

that church  
money is not  
personal pro-  
perty, but na-  
tional;

and that the  
suffering is not  
personal but ec-  
clesiastical.

In reality they  
lose the rewards  
of their pro-  
fession and the  
means of fulfilling  
obligations.

The distinc-  
tion is contemptible.

Your irrespon-  
sible legislators  
are mere crimi-  
nals.

You denounce,  
past tyrants in  
safety.

that certain men had no right to the possessions which they held under law, usage, the decisions of courts, and the accumulated prescription of a thousand years. They say that ecclesiastics are fictitious persons, creatures of the state, whom at pleasure they may destroy, and of course limit and modify in every particular; that the goods they possess are not properly theirs, but belong to the state which created the

- 10 fiction; and we are therefore not to trouble ourselves with what they may suffer in their natural feelings and natural persons, on account of what is done towards them in this their constructive character. Of what import is it under what names you injure men, and deprive them of the just emoluments of a profession in which they were not only permitted but encouraged by the state to engage; and upon the supposed certainty of which emoluments they  
20 had formed the plan of their lives, contracted debts, and led multitudes to an entire dependence upon them?

- I77. You do not imagine, Sir, that I am going to compliment this miserable distinction of persons with any long discussion. The arguments of tyranny are as contemptible as its force is dreadful. Had not your confiscators, by their early crimes, obtained a power which secures indemnity to all the crimes of which  
30 they have since been guilty, or that they can commit, it is not the syllogism of the logician, but the lash of the executioner, that would have refuted a sophistry which becomes an accomplice of theft and murder. The sophistic tyrants of Paris are loud in their declamations against the departed regal tyrants who in former ages have vexed the world. They are thus bold, because they are safe from the dungeons and iron cages of their old masters.  
40 Shall we be more tender of the tyrants of our own time, when we see them acting worse

tragedies under our eyes? shall we not use the same liberty that they do, when we can use it with the same safety? when to speak honest truth only requires a contempt of the opinions of those whose actions we abhor?

178. This outrage on all the rights of property was at first covered with what, on the system of their conduct, was the most astonishing of all pretexts—a regard to national faith. The enemies to property at first pretended a most tender, delicate, and scrupulous anxiety for keeping the king's engagements with the public creditor. These professors of the rights of men are so busy in teaching others, that they have not leisure to learn anything themselves; otherwise they would have known that it is to the property of the citizen, and not to the demands of the creditor of the state, that the first and original faith of civil society is pledged. The claim of the citizen is prior in time, paramount in title, superior in equity. The fortunes of individuals, whether possessed by acquisition, or by descent, or in virtue of a participation in the goods of some community, were no part of the creditor's security, expressed or implied. They never so much as entered into his head when he made his bargain. He well knew that the public, whether represented by a monarch or by a senate, can pledge nothing but the public estate; and it can have no public estate, except in what it derives from a just and proportioned imposition upon the citizens at large. This was engaged, and nothing else could be engaged, to the public creditor. No man can mortgage his injustice as a pawn for his fidelity.

179. It is impossible to avoid some observation on the contradictions caused by the extreme rigour and the extreme laxity of this new public faith, which influenced in this transaction, and which influenced not according to the nature of the obligation, but to the

We who are safe denounce you as their equals.

The original excuse; the money was taken to pay public debts.

10

But the citizen has more right to his property than the public creditor to his loans.

20

Individual property is a thing apart, of unquestionable right.

30

No creditor thinks of it as his security; governments pledge only public funds raised by taxation, they do not pledge unjust seizure.

40

Gross inconsistency; pecuniary engagements are held valid while other acts are rejected at pleasure.

Thus pensions  
are cancelled,  
though won by  
services.

An insulting  
defence.

They are now  
considering what  
treaties may be  
repudiated.

These two  
forms of obligation  
are stronger  
than the obligation  
to creditors.

description of the persons to whom it was engaged. No acts of the old government of the kings of France are held valid in the National Assembly, except his pecuniary engagements; acts of all others of the most ambiguous legality. The rest of the acts of that royal government are considered in so odious a light, that to have a claim under its authority is looked on as a sort of crime. A pension, given as a reward for service to the state, is surely as good a ground of property as any security for money advanced to the state. It is better; for money is paid, and well paid, to obtain that service. We have however seen multitudes of people under this description in France, who never had been deprived of their allowances by the most arbitrary ministers, in the most arbitrary times, by this assembly of the rights of men, robbed without mercy. They were told, in answer to their claim to the bread earned with their blood, that their services had not been rendered to the country that now exists.

180. This laxity of public faith is not confined to those unfortunate persons. The Assembly, with perfect consistency it must be owned, is engaged in a respectable deliberation how far it is bound by the treaties made with other nations under the former government, and 30 their committee is to report which of them they ought to ratify, and which not. By this means they have put the external fidelity of this virgin state on a par with its internal.

181. It is not easy to conceive upon what rational principle the royal government should not, of the two, rather have possessed the power of rewarding service, and making treaties, in virtue of its prerogative, than that of pledging to creditors the revenue of the state, actual and possible. The treasure of the nation, of all things, has been the least allowed to the

prerogative of the king of France, or to the prerogative of any king in Europe. To mortgage the public revenue implies the sovereign dominion, in the fullest sense, over the public purse. It goes far beyond the trust even of a temporary and occasional taxation. The acts, however, of that dangerous power (the distinctive mark of a boundless despotism) have been alone held sacred. Whence arose this preference given by a democratic assembly to a body of property deriving its title from the most critical and obnoxious of all the exertions of monarchical authority? Reason can furnish nothing to reconcile inconsistency; nor can partial favour be accounted for upon equitable principles. But the contradiction and partiality which admit no justification are not the less without an adequate cause; and that cause I do not think it difficult to discover.

182. By the vast debt of France a great moneyed interest has insensibly grown up, and with it a great power. By the ancient usages which prevailed in that kingdom, the general circulation of property, and in particular the mutual convertibility of land into money, and of money into land, had always been a matter of difficulty. Family settlements, rather more general and more strict than they are in England, the *jus retractus*, the great mass of landed property held by the crown, and, by a maxim of the French law, held unalienably, the vast estates of the ecclesiastic corporations,—all these had kept the landed and moneyed interests more separated in France, less miscible, and the owners of the two distinct species of property not so well disposed to each other as they are in this country.

183. The moneyed property was long looked on with rather an evil eye by the people. They saw it connected with their distresses, and aggravating them. It was no less envied

To be able to pledge public revenues is extreme power; yet this is allowed and upheld.

10

What is the explanation?

20

The rise of a moneyed class, and their jealousy of the landed aristocracy.

30

Land was not easily bought and the two classes did not freely mix.

This rich class was disliked and envied.

40

Intermarriage  
with the nobility  
increased dis-  
cord.

Social inferio-  
rity called forth  
resentment and  
revenge.

They resolved  
to attack the no-  
bility through  
the Church.

By nature  
they are ready  
for action and  
adventure, and  
thus they aided  
the revolution.

by the old landed interests, partly for the same reasons that rendered it obnoxious to the people, but much more so as it eclipsed, by the splendour of an ostentatious luxury, the unendowed pedigrees and naked titles of several among the nobility. Even when the nobility, which represented the more permanent landed interest, united themselves by marriage (which sometimes was the case) with the other

- 10 description, the wealth which saved the family from ruin was supposed to contaminate and degrade it. Thus the enmities and heartburnings of these parties were increased even by the usual means by which discord is made to cease and quarrels are turned into friendship. In the meantime the pride of the wealthy men, not noble or newly noble, increased with its cause. They felt with resentment an inferiority, the grounds of which they did not acknowledge. There was no measure to which they were not willing to lend themselves, in order to be revenged of the outrages of this rival pride, and to exalt their wealth to what they considered as its natural rank and estimation. They struck at the nobility through the crown and the church. They attacked them particularly on the side on which they thought them the most vulnerable, that is, the possessions of the church, which, through the patronage of the crown, generally devolved upon the nobility. The bishoprics and the great commendatory abbeys were, with few exceptions, held by that order.

184. In this state of real, though not always perceived, warfare between the noble ancient landed interest and the new moneyed interest, the greatest because the most applicable strength was in the hands of the latter. The moneyed interest is in its nature more ready for any adventure, and its possessors more disposed to new enterprises of any kind. Being of a recent acquisition, it falls in more naturally

with any novelties. It is therefore the kind of wealth which will be resorted to by all who wish for change.

Conservatives prefer wealth in land.

185. Along with the moneyed interest, a new description of men had grown up, with whom that interest soon formed a close and marked union; I mean the political men of letters. Men of letters, fond of distinguishing themselves, are rarely averse to innovation. Since the decline of the life and greatness of 10Louis the Fourteenth, they were not so much cultivated either by him, or by the regent, or the successors to the crown; nor were they engaged to the court by favours and emoluments so systematically as during the splendid period of that ostentatious and not impolitic reign. What they lost in the old court protection, they endeavoured to make up by joining in a sort of incorporation of their own; to which the two academies of France, and 20afterwards the vast undertaking of the Encyclopædia, carried on by a society of these gentlemen, did not a little contribute.

Another new class; the men of letters.

The old royal patronage was not much continued.

They became a sort of united body.

186. The literary cabal had some years ago formed something like a regular plan for the destruction of the Christian religion. This object they pursued with a degree of zeal which hitherto had been discovered only in the propagators of some system of piety. They were possessed with a spirit of proselytism in the most fanatical degree; and from thence, by an easy progress, with the spirit of persecution according to their means.<sup>1</sup> What was not to be done towards their great end by any direct or immediate act, might be wrought by a longer process through the medium of opinion. To command that opinion, the first step is to establish a dominion over those who direct it

They were hostile to Christianity:

30ready to proselytise and to persecute.

<sup>1</sup> This (down to the end of the first sentence in the next paragraph) and some other parts here and there, were inserted on his reading the manuscript, by my lost Son.

They also endeavoured to manufacture opinion.

Some had received generous honour, which only called forth a narrow spirit injurious to literature and philosophy.

They are bigots in opinion, but men of the world in intrigue.

They attacked all who did not follow them; and waited the opportunity of active persecution.

Slight persecution only stirred them on.

Their minds became perverted,

- They contrived to possess themselves, with great method and perseverance, of all the avenues to literary fame. Many of them indeed stood high in the ranks of literature and science. The world had done them justice; and in favour of general talents forgave the evil tendency of their peculiar principles. This was true liberality; which they returned by endeavouring to confine the reputation of sense, learning, and taste to themselves or their followers. I will venture to say that this narrow, exclusive spirit has not been less prejudicial to literature and to taste than to morals and true philosophy. These atheistical fathers have a bigotry of their own; and they have learnt to talk against monks with the spirit of a monk. But in some things they are men of the world. The resources of intrigue are called in to supply the defects of argument and wit. To this system of literary monopoly was joined an unremitting industry to blacken and discredit in every way, and by every means, all those who did not hold to their faction. To those who have observed the spirit of their conduct, it has long been clear that nothing was wanted but the power of carrying the intolerance of the tongue and of the pen into a persecution which would strike at property, liberty, and life.
187. The desultory and faint persecution carried on against them, more from compliance with form and decency than with serious resentment, neither weakened their strength, nor relaxed their efforts. The issue of the whole was, that, what with opposition, and what with success, a violent and malignant zeal, of a kind hitherto unknown in the world, had taken an entire possession of their minds, and rendered their whole conversation, which otherwise would have been pleasing and instructive, perfectly disgusting. A spirit of cabal, intrigue,

and proselytism pervaded all their thoughts, words, and actions. And, as controversial zeal soon turns its thoughts on force, they began to insinuate themselves into a correspondence with foreign princes ; in hopes, through their authority, which at first they flattered, they might bring about the changes they had in view. To them it was indifferent whether these changes were to be accomplished by the thunderbolt of despotism, or by the earthquake of popular commotion. The correspondence between this cabal and the late king of Prussia will throw no small light upon the spirit of all their proceedings.<sup>1</sup> For the same purpose for which they intrigued with princes, they cultivated, in a distinguished manner, the moneyed interest of France ; and partly through the means furnished by those whose peculiar offices gave them the most extensive and certain means of communication, they carefully occupied all the avenues to opinion.

188. Writers, especially when they act in a body, and with one direction, have great influence on the public mind ; the alliance, therefore, of these writers with the moneyed interest<sup>2</sup> had no small effect in removing the popular odium and envy which attended that species of wealth. These writers, like the propagators of all novelties, pretended to a great zeal for the poor and the lower orders, whilst in their satires they rendered hateful, by every exaggeration, the faults of courts, of nobility, and of priesthood. They became a sort of demagogues. They served as a link to unite, in favour of one object, obnoxious wealth to restless and desperate poverty.

<sup>1</sup> I do not choose to shock the feeling of the moral reader with any quotation of their vulgar, base, and profane language.

<sup>2</sup> Their connection with Turgot and almost all the people of the finance.

full of intrigue  
and application.

They appealed  
for help to a  
foreign despot ;

and sought  
favour with the  
monied classes ;

and got pos-  
session of the  
Press.

By the in-  
fluence of their  
writings they  
helped the rich,

flattered the  
poor,

and satirised  
priests and no-  
bles.

They united  
all classes in the  
attack on Go-  
vernment.

The combination of these two new classes explains what has happened, *viz.* the attack on property, and the safety of a monied class created by the crown;

and the payment of recent debts with ancient church property.

If the revenues were insufficient the loss should have fallen on the borrowers or the rash lenders;

not on an innocent third party.

189. As these two kinds of men appear principal leaders in all the late transactions, their junction and politics will serve to account, not upon any principles of law or of policy, but as a *cause*, for the general fury with which all the landed property of ecclesiastical corporations has been attacked; and the great care which, contrary to their pretended principles, has been taken, of a moneyed interest originating from the authority of the crown. All the envy against wealth and power was artificially directed against other descriptions of riches. On what other principle than that which I have stated can we account for an appearance so extraordinary and unnatural as that of the ecclesiastical possessions, which had stood so many successions of ages and shocks of civil violences, and were girded at once by justice, and by prejudice, being applied to the payment of debts, comparatively recent, invidious, and contracted by a decried and subverted government?
190. Was the public estate a sufficient stake for the public debts? Assume that it was not, and that a loss *must* be incurred somewhere—When the only estate lawfully possessed, and which the contracting parties had in contemplation at the time in which their bargain was made, happens to fail, who, according to the principles of natural and legal equity, ought to be the sufferer? Certainly it ought to be either the party who trusted, or the party who persuaded him to trust; or both; and not third parties who had no concern with the transaction. Upon any insolvency they ought to suffer who are weak enough to lend upon bad security, or they who fraudulently held out a security that was not valid. Laws are acquainted with no other rules of decision. But by the new institute of the rights of men, the only persons who in equity ought to suffer are the only persons who are to be saved harmless: those are

to answer the debt who neither were lenders nor borrowers, mortgagees or mortgagees.

191. What had the clergy to do with these transactions? What had they to do with any public engagement further than the extent of their own debt? To that, to be sure, their estates were bound to the last acre. Nothing can lead more to the true spirit of the Assembly, which fits for public confiscation, with its new equity, and its new morality, than an attention to their proceeding with regard to this debt of the clergy. The body of confiscators, true to that moneied interest for which they were false to every other, have found the clergy competent to incur a legal debt. Of course they declared them legally entitled to the property which their power of incurring the debt and mortgaging the estate implied; recognising the rights of those persecuted citizens, in the very act in which they were thus grossly violated.

10

The clergy should have to do only with their own debts.

It is noteworthy that the Assembly recognise clerical debt; thereby definitely recognising the clerical establishments which they then proceed to confiscate.

20

Why are not the borrowers held responsible?

192. If, as I said, any persons are to make good deficiencies to the public creditor, besides the public at large, they must be those who managed the agreement. Why therefore are not the estates of all the comptrollers-general confiscated?<sup>1</sup> Why not those of the long succession of ministers, financiers, and bankers who have been enriched whilst the nation was impoverished by their dealings and their counsels? Why is not the estate of M. Laborde declared forfeited rather than of the archbishop of Paris, who has had nothing to do in the creation or in the jobbing of the public funds? Or, if you must confiscate old landed estates in favour of the money-jobbers, why is the penalty confined to one description? I do not know whether the expenses of the Duke de Choiseul have left anything of the infinite sums which he had derived from the bounty of his master, during the transactions of a reign

30

Examples of administrators,

and great nobles who derived from the Crown.

<sup>1</sup> All have been confiscated in their turn.

Why is their wealth not seized?

Why the Cardinal and not the Duke?

Natural indignation.

This confiscation exceeds that of Marius or Sylla.

- which contributed largely by every species of prodigality in war and peace, to the present debt of France. If any such remains, why is not this confiscated? I remember to have been in Paris during the time of the old government. I was there just after the Duke d'Aiguillon had been snatched (as it was generally thought) from the block by the hand of a protecting despotism. He was a minister, and had some concern in the affairs of that prodigal period. Why do I not see his estate delivered up to the municipalities in which it is situated? The noble family of Noailles have long been servants (meritorious servants, I admit) to the crown of France, and have had of course some share in its bounties. Why do I hear nothing of the application of their estates to the public debt? Why is the estate of the Duke de Rochefoucault more sacred than that of the Cardinal de Rochefoucault? The former is, I doubt not, a worthy person; and (if it were not a sort of profaneness to talk of the use, as affecting the title to property) he makes a good use of his revenues; but it is no disrespect to him to say, what authentic information well warrants me, in saying, that the use made of a property equally valid, by his brother<sup>1</sup>, the cardinal archbishop of Rouen, was far more laudable and far more public-spirited. Can one hear of the proscription of such persons, and the confiscation of their effects, without indignation and horror? He is not a man who does not feel such emotions on such occasions. He does not deserve the name of a free-man who will not express them.
193. Few barbarous conquerors have ever made so terrible a revolution in property. None of the heads of the Roman factions, when they established "*crudelem illam hastam*" in all their actions of rapine, have ever set up to sale the goods of the conquered citizen to such an

<sup>1</sup> Not his brother, nor any near relation; but this mistake does not affect the argument.

enormous amount. It must be allowed in favour of those tyrants of antiquity, that what was done by them could hardly be said to be done in cold blood. Their passions were inflamed, their tempers soured, their understandings confused, with the spirit of revenge, with the innumerable reciprocated and recent inflictions and retaliations of blood and rapine. They were driven beyond all bounds of moderation by the apprehension of the return of power with the return of property, to the families of those they had injured beyond all hope of forgiveness.

194. These Roman confiscators, who were yet only in the elements of tyranny, and were not instructed in the rights of men to exercise all sorts of cruelties on each other without provocation, thought it necessary to spread a sort of colour over their injustice. They considered the vanquished party as composed of traitors who had borne arms, or otherwise had acted with hostility, against the commonwealth. They regarded them as persons who had forfeited their property by their crimes. With you, in your improved state of the human mind, there was no such formality. You seized upon five millions sterling of annual rent, and turned forty or fifty thousand human creatures out of their houses, because "such was your pleasure." The tyrant Harry the Eighth of England, as he was not better enlightened than the Roman Mariuses and Syllas, and had not studied in your new schools, did not know what an effectual instrument of despotism was to be found in that grand magazine of offensive weapons, the rights of men. When he resolved to rob the abbeys, as the club of the Jacobins have robbed all the ecclesiastics, he began by setting on foot a commission to examine into the crimes and abuses which prevailed in those communities. As it might be expected, his

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These Romans acted under the impulses of revenge and fear, and with all the confused excitement of civil war.

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They counted their enemies traitors.

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You with your theories acted at pleasure.

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Henry VIII had to find pretexts.

He examined  
and found abuses.

He procured  
a surrender of the  
abbey's,

and bribed his  
Parliament.

Now it can be  
done by theory.

Henry showed  
some deference  
to virtue and pub-  
lic opinion;

the value of a  
sense of shame.

Denham's  
strictures.

commission reported truths, exaggerations, and falsehoods. But truly or falsely, it reported abuses and offences. However, as abuses might be corrected, as every crime of persons does not infer a forfeiture with regard to communities, and as property, in that dark age, was not discovered to be a creature of prejudice, all those abuses (and there were enough of them) were hardly thought sufficient ground

- 10 for such a confiscation as it was for his purpose to make. He therefore procured the formal surrender of these estates. All these operose proceedings were adopted by one of the most decided tyrants in the rolls of history, as necessary preliminaries, before he could venture, by bribing the members of his two servile houses with a share of the spoil, and holding out to them an eternal immunity from taxation, to demand a confirmation of his 20 iniquitous proceedings by an act of parliament. Had fate reserved him to our times, four technical terms would have done his business, and saved him all this trouble; he needed nothing more than one short form of incantation—“*Philosophy, Light, Liberality, the Rights of Men.*”

195. I can say nothing in praise of those acts of tyranny, which no voice has hitherto ever commanded under any of their false colours; yet in these false colours a homage 30 was paid by despotism to justice. The power which was above all fear and all remorse was not set above all shame. Whilst Shame keeps its watch, Virtue is not wholly extinguished in the heart; nor will Moderation be utterly exiled from the minds of tyrants.

196. I believe every honest man sympathises in his reflections with our political poet on that occasion, and will pray to avert the omen whenever these acts of rapacious

despotism present themselves to his view or his imagination :

—“ May no such storm  
 Fall on our times, where ruin must reform.  
 Tell me (my Muse) what monstrous dire offence,  
 What crimes could any Christian king incense  
 To such a rage ? Was’t luxury or lust ?  
 Was he so temperate, so chaste, so just ?  
 Were these their crimes ? they were his own  
 much more,  
 But wealth is crime enough to him that’s poor.”<sup>1</sup>

An impreca-  
 tion.

The crimes be-  
 longed to the  
 King himself.

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197. This same wealth, which is at all times treason and *lese nation* to indigent and

<sup>1</sup> The rest of the passage is this—

“ Who having spent the treasures of his crown,  
 Condemns their luxury to feed his own.  
 And yet this act, to varnish o’er the shame  
 Of sacrilege, must bear Devotion’s name.  
 No crime so bold, but would be understood  
 A real, or at least a seeming good ;  
 Who fears not to do ill, yet fears the name,  
 And, free from conscience, is a slave to fame.  
 Thus he the church at once protects, and spoils ;  
 But princes’ swords are sharper than their  
 styles,  
 And thus to th’ ages past he makes amends,  
 Their charity destroys, their faith defends.  
 Then did Religion in a lazy cell,  
 In empty aëry contemplation dwell ;  
 And, like the block, unmoved lay ; but ours,  
 As much too active, like the stork devours  
 Is there no temperate region can be known,  
 Betwixt their frigid and our torrid zone ?  
 Could we not wake from that lethargic dream,  
 But to be restless in a worse extreme ?  
 And for that lethargy was there no cure,  
 But to be cast into a calenture ;  
 Can knowledge have no bound, but must advance,  
 So far, to make us wish for ignorance ?  
 And rather in the dark to grope our way,  
 Than, led by false guide, to err by day  
 Who sees these dismal heaps, but would demand  
 What barbarous invader sacked the land ?  
 But when he hears, no Goth, no Turk did bring  
 This desolation, but a Christian king ;  
 When nothing, but the name of zeal, appears  
 ‘Twixt our best actions and the worst of theirs,  
 What does he think our sacrilege would spare,  
 When such th’ effects of our devotion are ?”

*Cooper’s Hill*, by Sir JOHN DENHAM.

Rapacious  
despots wish all  
wealth forfeited.

Was France  
otherwise help-  
less?

Was not a  
fair redistribu-  
tion of taxes  
sufficient?

According to  
the finance  
minister little  
was needed, but  
economy.

Other objects  
could be met by  
a moderate tax  
adapted to in-  
comes.

rapacious despotism, under all modes of polity, was your temptation to violate property, law, and religion, united in one object. But was the state of France so wretched and undone, that no other resource but rapine remained to preserve its existence? On this point I wish to receive some information. When the states met, was the condition of the finances of France such, that, after economising on principles of justice and mercy through all departments, no fair reparation of burthens upon all the orders could possibly restore them? If such an equal imposition would have been sufficient, you well know it might easily have been made. M. Necker, in the budget which he laid before the orders assembled at Versailles, made a detailed exposition of the state of the French nation.<sup>1</sup>

198. If we give credit to him, it was not necessary to have recourse to any new impositions whatsoever, to put the receipts of France on a balance with its expenses. He stated the permanent charges of all descriptions, including the interest of a new loan of four hundred millions, at 531,444,000 livres; the fixed revenue at 475,294,000, making the deficiency 56,150,000, or short of £2,200,000 sterling. But to balance it, he brought forward savings and improvements of revenue (considered as entirely certain) to rather more than the amount of that deficiency; and he concludes with these emphatical words (p. 39), "Quel pays, Messieurs, que celui, où, *sans impôts* et avec de simples objets *inaperçus*, on peut faire disparaître un déficit qui a fait tant de bruit en Europe." As to the reimbursement, the sinking of debt, and the other great objects of public credit and political arrangement indicated in Mons. Necker's speech, no doubt could be entertained but that

<sup>1</sup> Rapport de Mons. le Directeur-Général des Finances, fait par ordre du Roi à Versailles, Mai 5, 1789.

a very moderate and proportioned assessment on the citizens without distinction would have provided for all of them to the fullest extent of their demand.

199. If this representation of Mons. Necker was false, then the Assembly are in the highest degree culpable for having forced the king to accept as his minister, and since the king's deposition, for having employed, as *their* minister, a man who had been capable of abusing so notoriously the confidence of his master and their own; in a matter too of the highest moment, and directly appertaining to his particular office. But if the representation was exact (as having always, along with you, conceived a high degree of respect for M. Necker, I make no doubt it was), then what can be said in favour of those who instead of moderate, reasonable, and general contribution, have in cold blood, and impelled by no necessity, had recourse to a partial and cruel confiscation?

200. Was that contribution refused on a pretext of privilege, either on the part of the clergy, or on that of the nobility? No, certainly. As to the clergy, they even ran before the wishes of the third order. Previous to the meeting of the states, they had in all their instructions expressly directed their deputies to renounce every immunity, which put them upon a footing distinct from the condition of their fellow-subjects. In this renunciation the clergy were even more explicit than the nobility.

201. But let us suppose that the deficiency had remained at the fifty-six millions (or £2,200,000 sterling), as at first stated by M. Necker. Let us allow that all the resources he opposed to that deficiency were impudent and groundless fictions; and that the Assembly (or their lords of articles<sup>1</sup> at the Jacobins) were

If Necker was wrong the Assembly erred in calling for him.

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If he was right the Assembly sinned in the confiscation.

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The nobility were ready, and the clergy eager, to renounce privilege.

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Suppose the deficit could not be met, why confiscate five millions to supply two?

<sup>1</sup> In the constitution of Scotland, during the Stuart reigns, a committee sat for preparing bills; and none could pass but those previously approved by them. This committee was called lords of articles.

The real end was mischievous.

The nobility and clergy were not, as is supposed, exempt from taxation.

They shared in indirect taxes,

and also paid heavy direct taxes.

Clergy of the old provinces had compounded for the tax per head, and instead of the land-tax they gave gifts.

- from thence justified in laying the whole burthen of that deficiency on the clergy,—yet allowing all this, a necessity of £2,200,000 sterling will not support a confiscation to the amount of five millions. The imposition of £2,200,000 on the clergy, as partial, would have been oppressive and unjust, but it would not have been altogether ruinous to those on whom it was imposed; and therefore it would not have answered the real purpose of the managers.
202. Perhaps persons unacquainted with the state of France, on hearing the clergy and the noblesse were privileged in point of taxation, may be led to imagine that, previous to the Revolution, these bodies had contributed nothing to the state. This is a great mistake. They certainly did not contribute equally with each other, nor either of them equally with the commons. They both, however, contributed largely. Neither nobility nor clergy enjoyed any exemption from the excise on consumable commodities, from duties of custom, or from any of the other numerous *indirect* impositions which in France, as well as here, make so very large a proportion of all payments to the public. The noblesse paid the capitation. They paid also a land-tax, called the twentieth penny, to the height sometimes of three, sometimes of four, shillings in the pound; both of them *direct* impositions of no light nature, and no trivial produce. The clergy of the provinces annexed by conquest to France (which in extent make about an eighth part of the whole, but in wealth a much larger proportion) paid likewise to the capitation and the twentieth penny, at the rate paid by the nobility. The clergy in the old provinces did not pay the capitation; but they had redeemed themselves at the expense of about twenty-four millions, or a little more than a million sterling. They were exempted from the twentieths; but then they made free

gifts: they contracted debts for the state; and they were subject to some other charges, the whole computed at about a thirteenth part of their clear income. They ought to have paid annually about forty thousand pounds more, to put them on a par with the contribution of the nobility.

203. When the terrors of this tremendous proscription hung over the clergy, they made an offer of a contribution, through the archbishop of Aix, which, for its extravagance, ought not to have been accepted. But it was evidently and obviously more advantageous to the public creditor, than anything which could rationally be promised by the confiscation. Why was it not accepted? The reason is plain—There was no desire that the church should be brought to serve the state. The service of the state was made a pretext to destroy the church. In their way to the destruction of the church they would not scruple to destroy their country; and they have destroyed it. One great end in the project would have been defeated, if the plan of extortion had been adopted in lieu of the scheme of confiscation. The new landed interest connected with the new republic, and connected with it for its very being, could not have been created. This was among the reasons why that extravagant ransom was not accepted.

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When the crisis came the clergy made a very liberal offer.

This was refused, partly because of the project of creating a new landed interest of the stock-jobbers.

The impracticability of the scheme was soon shown.

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All land fell in value.

204. The madness of the project of confiscation, on the plan that was first pretended, soon became apparent. To bring this unwieldy mass of landed property, enlarged by the confiscation of all the vast landed domain of the crown, at once into market, was obviously to defeat the profits proposed by the confiscation by depreciating the value of those lands, and indeed of all the landed estates throughout France. Such a sudden diversion of all its circulating money from trade to land must be an

What then? A proposal to take stock and give over the lands to stock-jobbers.

Municipalities protested: a n i money went out of circulation.

The municipalities in the country bribed:

urgent needs of administration.

The new debt and the paper currency.

additional mischief. What step was taken? Did the Assembly, on becoming sensible of the inevitable ill effects of their projected sale, revert to the offers of the clergy? No distress could oblige them to travel in a course which was disgraced by any appearance of justice. Giving over all hopes from a general immediate sale, another project seems to have succeeded. They proposed to take stock in exchange for

- 10 the church lands. In that project great difficulties arose in equalising the objects to be exchanged. Other obstacles also presented themselves, which threw them back again upon some project of sale. The municipalities had taken an alarm. They would not hear of transferring the whole plunder of the kingdom to the stock-holders in Paris. Many of those municipalities had been (upon system) reduced to the most deplorable indigence. Money was
- 20 nowhere to be seen. They were therefore led to the point that was so ardently desired. They panted for a currency of any kind which might revive their perishing industry. The municipalities were then to be admitted to a share in the spoil, which evidently rendered the first scheme (if ever it had been seriously entertained) altogether impracticable. Public exigencies pressed upon all sides. The minister of finance reiterated his call for supply with a most urgent, anxious, and boding voice. Thus pressed on all sides, instead of the first plan of converting their bankers into bishops and abbots, instead of paying the old debt, they contracted a new debt, at three per cent., creating a new paper currency, founded on an eventual sale of the church lands. They issued this paper currency to satisfy in the first instance chiefly the demands made upon them by the *bank of discount*, the great machine, or paper-mill, of their fictitious wealth.

205. The spoil of the church was now become the only resource of all their operations in finance, the vital principle of all their politics, the sole security for the existence of their power. It was necessary by all, even the most violent means, to put every individual on the same bottom, and to bind the nation in one guilty interest to uphold this act, and the authority of those by whom it was done. In order to force the most reluctant into a participation of their pillage, they rendered their paper circulation compulsory in all payments. Those who consider the general tendency of their schemes to this one object as a centre, and a centre from which afterwards all their measures radiate, will not think that I dwell too long upon this part of the proceedings of the National Assembly.

206. To cut off all appearance of connection between the crown and public justice, and to bring the whole under implicit obedience to the dictators in Paris, the old independent judicature of the parliaments, with all its merits, and all its faults, was wholly abolished. Whilst the parliaments existed it was evident that the people might some time or other come to resort to them, and rally under the standard of their ancient laws. It became, however, a matter of consideration that the magistrates and officers, in the courts now abolished, *had purchased their places* at a very high rate, for which, as well as for the duty they performed, they received but a very low return of interest. Simple confiscation is a boon only for the clergy;—to the lawyers some appearances of equity are to be observed; and they are to receive compensation to an immense amount. Their compensation becomes part of the national debt, for the liquidation of which there is the one exhaustless fund. The lawyers are to obtain their compensation in the new church paper, which is to

The confisca-  
tion now becomes  
essential, and all  
must be made  
participants.  
Hence the assig-  
nats are made  
compulsory.

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This was the  
goal and the new  
beginning.

Members of  
the abolished  
parlements, and  
other dismissed  
officers, are to  
be compensated  
from the church  
funds, in the new  
paper coin;

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their rights  
being acknow-  
ledged,

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but their sense  
of law disregarded.

Clergymen receive their small salaries in these symbols of ruin and sacrilege.

An almost unparalleled outrage.

A new iniquity.

The lands are to be given to men with little money,

who will be true to the revolution,

and find in the lands, and by oppression of the peasantry, the means of payment.

march with the new principles of judicature and legislature. The dismissed magistrates are to take their share of martyrdom with the ecclesiastics, or to receive their own property from such a fund, and in such a manner, as all those who have been seasoned with the ancient principles of jurisprudence, and had been the sworn guardians of property, must look upon with horror. Even the clergy are to receive their miserable allowance out of the depreciated paper, which is stamped with the indelible character of sacrilege, and with the symbols of their own ruin, or they must starve. So violent an outrage upon credit, property, and liberty as this compulsory paper currency, has seldom been exhibited by the alliance of bankruptcy and tyranny, at any time, or in any nation.

207. In the course of all these operations, at length comes out the grand *arcانum*;—that in reality, and in a fair sense, the lands of the church (so far as anything certain can be gathered from their proceedings) are not to be sold at all. By the late resolutions of the National Assembly, they are indeed to be delivered to the highest bidder. But it is to be observed, that *a certain portion only of the purchase money is to be laid down*. A period of twelve years is to be given for the payment of the rest. The philosophic purchasers are therefore, on payment of a sort of fine, to be put instantly into possession of the estate. It becomes in some respects a sort of gift to them; to be held on the feudal tenure of zeal to the new establishment. This project is evidently to let in a body of purchasers without money. The consequence will be, that these purchasers, or rather grantees, will pay, not only from the rents as they accrue, which might as well be received by the state, but from the spoil of the materials of buildings, from waste in woods,

and from whatever money, by hands habituated to the gripings of usury, they can wring from the miserable peasant. He is to be delivered over to the mercenary and arbitrary discretion of men, who will be stimulated to every species of extortion by the growing demands on the growing profits of an estate held under the precarious settlement of a new political system.

Extortion will increase with uncertainty of tenure.

. 208. When all the frauds, impostures, violations, rapines, burnings, murders, confiscations, compulsory paper currencies, and every description of tyranny and cruelty employed to bring about and to uphold this Revolution, have their natural effect—that is, to shock the moral sentiments of all virtuous and sober minds, the abettors of this philosophic system immediately strain their throats in a declamation against the old monarchical government of France. When they have rendered that deposed power sufficiently black, they then proceed in argument, as if all those who disapprove of their new abuses must of course be partisans of the old; that those who reprobate their crude and violent schemes of liberty ought to be treated as advocates for servitude. I admit that their necessities do compel them to this base and contemptible fraud. Nothing can reconcile men to their proceedings and projects, but the supposition that there is no third option between them and some tyranny as odious as can be furnished by the records of history, or by the invention of poets. This prattling of theirs hardly deserves the name of sophistry. It is nothing but plain impudence. Have these gentlemen never heard, in the whole circle of the worlds of theory and practice, of anything between the despotism of

When the world is shocked all the blame is put on the old monarchy.

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Next they pretend that all who oppose the present misgovernment are unqualified supporters of the old.

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A despicable fraud.

They wish it to be thought that there is nothing intermediate between them and tyranny.

Two extremes.

A constitutional monarchy, with a balancing peerage, and a controlling House of Representatives.

Does no one favour such mixed Government? or censure those who to avoid it committed so many crimes?

May not one doubt the superiority of pure democracy?

This French democracy will probably become a mean oligarchy.

Pure democracy might be necessary, or even desirable;

but not in a great country.

the monarch and the despotism of the multitude? Have they never heard of a monarchy directed by laws, controlled and balanced by the great hereditary wealth and hereditary dignity of a nation; and both again controlled by a judicious check from the reason and feeling of the people at large, acting by a suitable and permanent organ? Is it then impossible that

10 a man may be found who, without criminal intention, or pitiable absurdity, shall prefer such a mixed and tempered government to either of the extremes; and who may repute that nation to be destitute of all wisdom and of all virtue, which, having in its choice to obtain such a government with ease, *or rather to confirm it when actually possessed*, thought proper to commit a thousand crimes, and to subject their country to a thousand evils, in order to avoid it? Is it then a truth so universally acknowledged, that a pure democracy is the only tolerable form into which human society can be thrown, that a man is not permitted to hesitate about its merits, without the suspicion of being a friend to tyranny—that is, of being a foe to mankind?

209. I do not know under what description to class the present ruling authority in France. It affects to be a pure democracy, though I think it in a direct train of becoming shortly a mischievous and ignoble oligarchy. But for the present I admit it to be a contrivance of the nature and effect of what it pretends to. I reprobate no form of government merely upon abstract principles. There may be situations in which the purely democratic form will become necessary. There may be some (very few, and very particularly circumstanced) where it would be clearly desirable. This I do not take to be the case of France, or of any other great country. Until now, we have seen no example of considerable democracies. The ancients were better acquainted with them.

Not being wholly unread in the authors, who had seen the most of those constitutions, and who best understood them, I cannot help concurring with their opinion, that an absolute democracy, no more than absolute monarchy, is to be reckoned among the legitimate forms of government. They think it rather the corruption and degeneracy, than the sound-constitution of a republic. If I recollect rightly, Aristotle observes, that a democracy has many striking points of resemblance with a tyranny.<sup>1</sup> Of this I am certain, that in a democracy the majority of the citizens is capable of exercising the most cruel oppressions upon the minority, whenever strong divisions prevail in that kind of polity, as they often must; and that oppression of the minority will extend to far greater numbers, and will be carried on with much greater fury than can almost ever be apprehended from the dominion of a single sceptre. In such a popular persecution, individual sufferers are in a much more deplorable condition than in any other. Under a cruel prince they have the balmy compassion of mankind to assuage the smart of their wounds; they have the plaudits of the people to animate their generous constancy under their sufferings: but those who are subjected to wrong under multitudes are deprived of all external consolation. They seem deserted by mankind, overpowered by a conspiracy of their whole species.

210. But admitting democracy not to have that inevitable tendency to party tyranny which

<sup>1</sup> When I wrote this I quoted from memory, after many years had elapsed from my reading the passage. A learned friend has found it, and it is as follows:—

"The ethical character is the same; both exercise despotism over the better class of citizens; and decrees are in the one, what ordinances and arrêts are in the other: the demagogue too, and the court favourite, are not unfrequently the same identical men, and always bear a close analogy; and these have the principal power, each in their respective forms of government, favourites with the absolute monarch, and demagogues with a people such as I have described."—Arist. *Politic.*, lib. iv., cap. 4.

The ancients reckoned it not legitimate, but degenerate.

Aristotle compared it with a tyranny.

It is certainly capable of oppression,

wide, severe and pitiful;

and the oppressed find no sympathy.

Even if it be good, monarchy also may be good.

And it is easier to turn a monarchy than to turn a republic into a mixed system.

Fallen greatness is easily condemned:

but wise men will not be satirists,

they will note the elements of good.

Your government was almost pure monarchy, and had many abuses that had gradually arisen.

Faults are admitted.

I suppose it to have, and admitting it to possess as much good in it when unmixed as I am sure it possesses when compounded with other forms; does monarchy, on its part, contain nothing at all to recommend it? I do not often quote Bolingbroke, nor have his works in general left any permanent impression on my mind. He is a presumptuous and a superficial writer. But he has one observation which, 10 in my opinion, is not without depth and solidity. He says that he prefers a monarchy to other governments; because you can better ingraft any description of republic on a monarchy than anything of monarchy upon the republican forms. I think him perfectly right. The fact is so historically; and it agrees well with the speculation.

211. I know how easy a topic it is to dwell on the faults of departed greatness. By a revolution in the state, the fawning sycophant of yesterday is converted into the austere critic of the present hour. But steady, independent minds, when they have an object of so serious a concern to mankind as government under their contemplation, will disdain to assume the part of satirists and declaimers. They will judge of human institutions as they do of human characters. They will sort out the good from the evil, which is mixed in mortal institutions, 20 as it is in mortal men.

212. Your government in France, though usually, and I think justly, reputed the best of the unqualified or ill-qualified monarchies, was still full of abuses. These abuses accumulated in a length of time, as they must accumulate in every monarchy not under the constant inspection of a popular representative. I am no stranger to the faults and defects of the subverted government of France; and I think 30 I am not inclined by nature or policy to make a panegyric upon anything which is a just and natural object of censure. But the question is

not now of the vices of that monarchy, but of its existence. Is it then true that the French government was such as to be incapable or undeserving of reform; so that it was of absolute necessity that the whole fabric should be at once pulled down, and the area cleared for the erection of a theoretic, experimental edifice in its place? All France was of a different opinion in the beginning of the year 1789. The instructions to the representatives to the states-general, from every district in that kingdom, were filled with projects for the reformation of that government, without the remotest suggestion of a design to destroy it. Had such a design been then even insinuated, I believe there would have been but one voice, and that voice for rejecting it with scorn and horror. Men have been sometimes led by degrees, sometimes hurried, into things of which, if they could have seen the whole together, they never would have permitted the most remote approach. When those instructions were given, there was no question but that abuses existed, and that they demanded a reform; nor is there now. In the interval between the instructions and the Revolution, things changed their shape; and, in consequence of that change, the true question at present is, Whether those who would have reformed, or those who have destroyed, are in the right?

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213. To hear some men speak of the late monarchy of France, you would imagine that they were talking of Persia bleeding under the ferocious sword of Tahmas Kouli Khân; or at least describing the barbarous anarchic despotism of Turkey, where the finest countries in the most genial climates in the world are wasted by peace more than any countries have been worried by war; where arts are unknown, where manufacturers languish, where science is extinguished, where agriculture decays, where

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These do not justify destruction.

Reform was quite possible.

The states-general were elected to reform; no one wishing to destroy.

The present condition could not have been anticipated.

Which method is right?

Some now talk as if the monarchy had destroyed arts and sciences and men.

Let us look  
to the facts.

It had many  
correctives, and  
was despotic  
chiefly in ap-  
pearance.

Take the test  
of population.

Estimates in  
1700, 1730 and  
1780.

A rise from  
eighteen to near-  
ly thirty millions.

the human race itself melts away and perishes under the eye of the observer. Was this the case of France? I have no way of determining the question but by a reference to facts. Facts do not support this resemblance. Along with much evil, there is some good in monarchy itself; and some corrective to its evil from religion, from laws, from manners, from opinions, the French monarchy must have received; which rendered it (though by no means a free, and therefore by no means a good, constitution) a despotism rather in appearance than in reality.

214. Among the standards upon which the effects of government on any country are to be estimated, I must consider the state of its population as not the least certain. No country in which population flourishes, and is in progressive improvement, can be under a *very* mischievous government. About sixty years ago, the Intendants of the generalities of France made, with other matters, a report of the population of their several districts. I have not the books, which are very voluminous, by me, nor do I know where to procure them (I am obliged to speak by memory, and therefore the less positively), but I think the population of France was by them, even at that period, estimated at twenty-two millions of souls. At the end of the last century it had been generally calculated at eighteen. On either of these estimations, France was not ill peopled. M. Necker, who is an authority for his own time at least equal to the Intendants for theirs, reckons, and upon apparently sure principles, the people of France, in the year 1780, at twenty-four millions six hundred and seventy thousand. But was this the probable ultimate term under the old establishment? Dr. Price is of opinion that the growth of population in France was by no means at its *acmé* in that year. I

certainly defer to Dr. Price's authority a good deal more in these speculations than I do in his general politics. This gentleman, taking ground on M. Necker's data, is very confident that since the period of that minister's calculation, the French population has increased rapidly; so rapidly, that in the year 1789 he will not consent to rate the people of that kingdom at a lower number than thirty millions. After abating much (and much I think ought to be abated) from the sanguine calculation of Dr. Price, I have no doubt that the population of France did increase considerably during this later period; but supposing that it increased to nothing more than will be sufficient to complete the twenty-four millions six hundred and seventy thousand to twenty-five millions, still a population of twenty-five millions, and that in an increasing progress, on a space of about twenty-seven thousand square leagues, is immense. It is, for instance, a good deal more than the proportionable population of this island, or even than that of England, the best peopled part of the united kingdom.

215. It is not universally true that France is a fertile country. Considerable tracts of it are barren, and labour under other natural disadvantages. In the portions of that territory where things are more favourable, as far as I am able to discover, the numbers of the people correspond to the indulgence of nature.<sup>1</sup> The Generality of Lisle (this I admit is the strongest example) upon an extent of four hundred and four leagues and a half, about ten years ago, contained seven hundred and thirty-four thousand six hundred souls, which is one thousand seven hundred and seventy-two inhabitants to each square league. The middle term for the

Price's exaggerated estimate.

10 Some abatement probable.

20 In any case the population is considerable; and more, in proportion to size, than that of England.

30 Moreover France has barren districts.

Some fertile parts, as Lisle, are thickly populated.

<sup>1</sup> *De l'Administration des Finances de la France*, par Mons. Necker, vol. i., p. 288.

rest of France is about nine hundred inhabitants to the same admeasurement.

The government under which such numbers lived cannot have been altogether bad;

though soil and industry contributed.

The test of  
Wealth.

France is comparatively inferior to England, both as regards distribution and circulation.

Yet it is an opulent country.

216. I do not attribute this population to the deposed government; because I do not like to compliment the contrivances of men with what is due in a great degree to the bounty of Providence. But that decried government could not have obstructed, most probably it favoured, the operation of those causes (whatever they were), whether of nature in the soil, or habits of industry among the people, which has produced so large a number of the species throughout that whole kingdom, and exhibited in some particular places such prodigies of population. I never will suppose that fabric of a state to be the worst of all political institutions, which, by experience, is found to contain a principle favourable (however latent it may be) to the increase of mankind.

217. The wealth of a country is another, and no contemptible standard, by which we may judge whether, on the whole, a government be protecting or destructive. France far exceeds England in the multitude of her people; but I apprehend that her comparative wealth is much inferior to ours; that it is not so equal in the distribution, nor so ready in the circulation. I believe the difference in the form of the two governments to be amongst the causes of this advantage on the side of England. I speak of England, not of the whole British dominions; which, if compared with those of France, will, in some degree, weaken the comparative rate of wealth upon our side. But that wealth, which will not endure a comparison with the riches of England, may constitute a very respectable degree of opulence. M. Necker's book, published in 1785,<sup>1</sup> contains an accurate and interesting collection of facts relative to public

<sup>1</sup> *De l' Administration des Finances de la France*, par Mons. Necker.

economy and to political arithmetic ; and his speculations on the subject are in general wise and liberal. In that work he gives an idea of the state of France, very remote from the portrait of a country whose government was a perfect grievance, an absolute evil, admitting no cure but through the violent and uncertain remedy of a total revolution. He affirms that, from the year 1726 to the year 1784, there was coined at the mint of France, in the species of gold and silver, to the amount of about one hundred millions of pounds sterling.<sup>1</sup>

218. It is impossible that M. Necker should be mistaken in the amount of the bullion which has been coined in the mint. It is a matter of official record. The reasonings of this able financier, concerning the quantity of gold and silver which remained for circulation, when he wrote in 1785, that is, about four years before the deposition and imprisonment of the French king, are not of equal certainty ; but they are laid on grounds so apparently solid, that it is not easy to refuse a considerable degree or assent to his calculation. He calculates the *numeraire*, or what we call *specie*, then actually existing in France, at about eighty-eight millions of the same English money. A great accumulation of wealth for one country, large as that country is ! M. Necker was so far from considering this influx of wealth as likely to cease, when he wrote in 1785, that he presumes upon a future annual increase of two per cent. upon the money brought into France during the periods from which he computed.

219. Some adequate cause must have originally introduced all the money coined at its mint into that kingdom ; and some cause as operative must have kept at home, or returned into its bosom, such a vast flood of treasure as

Yet her coinage is enormous.

10

The existing specie calculated at 88 millions sterling :

20

and increasing at 2 per cent per annum.

30

Such quantities, coined and kept, suggest, industry and security.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. iii., chap. 8 and chap. 9.

A picture of France :

cities many and wealthy,

roads and bridges,

canals and traffic,

ports, and ships,

fortresses, and armies,

agriculture extensive and skilful,

manufactures,

institutions of charity,

arts, and refinement,

eminent men.

M. Necker calculates to remain for domestic circulation. Suppose any reasonable deductions from M. Necker's computation, the remainder must still amount to an immense sum. Causes thus powerful to acquire, and to retain, cannot be found in discouraged industry, insecure property, and a positively destructive government. Indeed, when I consider the face of the kingdom of France; the multitude and opulence of her cities; the useful magnificence of her spacious high roads and bridges; the opportunity of her artificial canals and navigations opening the conveniences of maritime communication through a solid continent of so immense an extent; when I turn my eyes to the stupendous works of her ports and harbours, and to her whole naval apparatus, whether for war or trade; when I bring before my view the number of her fortifications, constructed with so bold and masterly a skill, and made and maintained at so prodigious a charge, presenting an armed front and impenetrable barrier to her enemies upon every side; when I recollect how very small a part of that extensive region is without cultivation, and to what complete perfection the culture of many of the best productions of the earth have been brought in France; when I reflect on the excellence of her manufactures and fabrics, second to none but ours, and in some particulars not second; when I contemplate the grand foundations of charity, public and private; when I survey the state of all the arts that beautify and polish life; when I reckon the men she has bred for extending her fame in war, her able statesmen, the multitude of her profound lawyers and theologians, her philosophers, her critics, her historians and antiquaries, her poets and her orators, sacred and profane; I behold in all this something which awes and commands the imagination, which

checks the mind on the brink of precipitate and indiscriminate censure, and which demands that we should very seriously examine what and how great are the latent vices that could authorise us at once to level so spacious a fabric with the ground. I do not recognise in this view of things the despotism of Turkey. Nor do I discern the character of a government that has been, on the whole, so oppressive, or so corrupt, or so negligent, as to be utterly unfit *for all reformation*. I must think such a government well deserved to have its excellencies heightened, its faults corrected, and its capacities improved into a British constitution.

220. Whoever has examined into the proceedings of that deposed government for several years back, cannot fail to have observed, amidst the inconstancy and fluctuation natural to courts, an earnest endeavour towards the prosperity and improvement of the country; 20 he must admit that it had long been employed, in some instances wholly to remove, in many considerably to correct, the abusive practices and usages that had prevailed in the state; and that even the unlimited power of the sovereign over the persons of his subjects, inconsistent, as undoubtedly it was, with law and liberty, had yet been every day growing more mitigated in the exercise. So far from refusing itself to reformation, that government was open, with a censurable degree of facility, to all sorts of projects and projectors on the subject. Rather too much countenance was given to the spirit of innovation, which soon was turned against those who fostered it, and ended in their ruin. It is but cold, and no very flattering, justice to that fallen monarchy, to say that, for many years, it trespassed more by levity and want of judgment in several of its schemes, than from any defect in diligence or in public spirit. To 40 compare the government of France for the last

These forbid rash censure;

and show a government capable of reform and worthy of improvement.

Government had been steadily aiming at improvement,

correcting wrong usages,

and mitigating authority;

30 too readily listening to projects and innovations;

erring from misjudgment rather than from want of public spirit;

not equal to the best governments,

but, in respect of wanton expenditure or severity of discipline, superior to the preceding reigns.

It is not likely that the present system will succeed so well.

I think the reverse will be seen.

Population and wealth will decrease.

Many, rejecting the new freedom, have sought a home in the colder climate of Canada.

fifteen or sixteen years with wise and well-constituted establishments during that, or during any period, is not to act with fairness. But if in point of prodigality in the expenditure of money, or in point of rigour in the exercise of power, it be compared with any of the former reigns, I believe candid judges will give little credit to the good intentions of those who dwell perpetually on the donations to favourites,

10 or on the expenses of the court, or on the horrors of the Bastile, in the reign of Louis the Sixteenth.<sup>1</sup>

221. Whether the system, if it deserves such a name, now built on the ruins of that ancient monarchy, will be able to give a better account of the population and wealth of the country, which it has taken under its care, is a matter very doubtful. Instead of improving by the change, I apprehend that a long series of 20 years must be told, before it can recover in any degree the effects of this philosophic revolution, and before the nation can be replaced on its former footing. If Dr. Price should think fit, a few years hence, to favour us with an estimate of the population of France, he will hardly be able to make up his tale of thirty millions of souls, as computed in 1789, or the Assembly's computation of twenty-six millions of that year; or even M. Necker's twenty-five 30 millions in 1780. I hear that there are considerable emigrations from France; and that many, quitting that voluptuous climate, and that seductive *Circean* liberty, have taken refuge in the frozen regions, and under the British despotism of Canada.

222. In the present disappearance of coin, no person could think it the same country, in

<sup>1</sup> The world is obliged to M. de Calonne for the pains he has taken to refute the scandalous exaggerations relative to some of the royal expenses, and to detect the fallacious account given of pensions, for the wicked purpose of provoking the populace to all sorts of crimes.

which the present minister of the finances has been able to discover fourscore millions sterling in specie. From its general aspect one would conclude that it had been for some time past under the special direction of the learned academicians of Laputa and Balnibarbi.<sup>1</sup> Already the population of Paris has so declined, that Mr. Necker stated to the National Assembly the provision to be made for its subsistence at a fifth less than what had formerly been found requisite.<sup>2</sup> It is said (and I have never heard it contradicted) that a hundred thousand people are out of employment in that city, though it is become the seat of the imprisoned court and National Assembly. Nothing, I am credibly informed, can exceed the shocking and disgusting spectacle of mendicancy displayed in that capital. Indeed the votes of the National Assembly leave no doubt of the fact. They have lately appointed a standing committee of mendicancy. They are contriving at once a vigorous police on this subject, and, for the first time, the imposition of a tax to maintain the poor, for whose present relief great sums appear on the face of the public accounts of the year.<sup>3</sup> In

Now money is not circulating;

there are many signs of misgovernment,

including unemployment,

and beggary,

with new taxes for the relief of poverty.

<sup>1</sup> See *Gulliver's Travels* for the idea of countries governed by philosophers.

<sup>2</sup> M. de Calonne states the falling off of the population of Paris as far more considerable; and it may be so, since the period of M. Necker's calculation.

	Livres.	£	s.	d.
Travaux de charité pour subvenir au manque de travail à Paris et dans les provinces . . . . .	3,866,920	— 161,121	13	4
Destruction de vagabondage et de la mendicité . . . . .	1,671,417	— 69,642	7	6
Primes pour l'importation de grains	5,671,907	— 236,329	9	2
Dépenses relatives aux subsistances, déduction fait des récouvrements qui ont eu lieu . . . . .	39,871,790	— 1,661,324	11	8
Total <i>Liv.</i>	<u>51,082,034</u>	<u>£2,128,418</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>8</u>

When I sent this book to the press, I entertained some doubt concerning the nature and extent of the last article in the above accounts, which is only

Yet the club-leaders think highly of themselves,

and despise others,

and labour to conceal the facts.

Poverty with true liberty is better than wealth with slavery;

but liberty, without justice and without prosperity, is of a dubious character.

Next the nobility are attacked.

the meantime the leaders of the legislative clubs and coffee-houses are intoxicated with admiration at their own wisdom and ability. They speak with the most sovereign contempt of the rest of the world. They tell the people to comfort them in the rags with which they have clothed them, that they are a nation of philosophers ; and, sometimes, by all the arts of quackish parade, by show, tumult, and bustle, sometimes by the alarms of plots and invasions, they attempt to drown the cries of indigence, and to divert the eyes of the observer from the ruin and wretchedness of the state. A brave people will certainly prefer liberty accompanied with a virtuous poverty to a depraved and wealthy servitude. But before the price of comfort and opulence is paid, one ought to be pretty sure it is real liberty which is purchased, and that she is to be purchased at no other price. I shall always, however, consider that liberty as very equivocal in her appearance, which has not wisdom and justice for her companions ; and does not lead prosperity and plenty in her train.

223. The advocates for this Revolution, not satisfied with exaggerating the vices of their ancient government, strike at the fame of their country itself, by painting almost all that could have attracted the attention of strangers,

under a general head, without any detail. Since then I have seen M. de Calonne's work. I must think it a great loss to me that I had not that advantage earlier. M. de Calonne thinks this article to be on account of general subsistence ; but as he is not able to comprehend how so great a loss as upwards of £1,661,000 sterling could be sustained on the difference between the price and the sale of grain, he seems to attribute this enormous head of charge to secret expenses of the Revolution. I cannot say anything positively on that subject. The reader is capable of judging, by the aggregate of these immense charges, on the state and condition of France ; and the system of public economy adopted in that nation. These articles of account produced no inquiry or discussion in the National Assembly.

I mean their nobility and their clergy, as objects of horror. If this were only a libel, there had not been much in it. But it has practical consequences. Had your nobility and gentry, who formed the great body of your landed men, and the whole of your military officers, resembled those of Germany at the period when the Hanse-towns were necessitated to confederate against the nobles in defence of their property—had they been like the *Orsini* and *Vitelli* in Italy, who used to sally from their fortified dens to rob the trader and traveller—had they been such as the *Mamelukes* in Egypt, or the *Nayres* on the coast of Malabar, I do admit that too critical an inquiry might not be advisable into the means of freeing the world from such a nuisance. The statues of Equity and Mercy might be veiled for a moment. The tenderest minds, confounded with the dreadful exigence in which morality submits to the suspension of its own rules in favour of its own principles, might turn aside whilst fraud and violence were accomplishing the destruction of a pretended nobility which disgraced, whilst it persecuted, human nature. The persons most abhorrent from blood, and treason, and arbitrary confiscation, might remain silent spectators of this civil war between the vices.

224. But did the privileged nobility who met under the king's precept at Versailles, in 1789, or their constituents, deserve to be looked on as the *Nayres* or *Mamelukes* of this age, or as the *Orsini* and *Vitelli* of ancient times? If I had then asked the question I should have passed for a madman. What have they since done that they were to be driven into exile, that their persons should be hunted about, mangled, and tortured, their families dispersed, their houses laid in ashes, and that their order should be abolished, and the memory of it, if

Practical bearings on the Constitution.

Examples of oppressive higher classes.

In such cases equity might be forgotten, while the wicked punished the guilty.

But comparison with these is absurd.

What have the nobles now done?

They welcomed reform, and surrendered privileges.

The only question was the right of control between the States.

It is the fashion to praise Henry IV.

He was not more amiable and reforming than Louis XVI.

But he was energetic,

politic, and

self-assertive.

possible, extinguished, by ordaining them to change the very names by which they were usually known? Read their instructions to their representatives. They breathe the spirit of liberty as warmly, and they recommend reformation as strongly, as any other order. Their privileges relative to contribution were voluntarily surrendered; as the king, from the beginning, surrendered all pretence to a right of taxation. Upon a free constitution there was but one opinion in France. The absolute monarchy was at an end. It breathed its last, without a groan, without struggle, without convulsion. All the struggle, all the dissension, arose afterwards upon the preference of a despotic democracy to a government of reciprocal control. The triumph of the victorious party was over the principles of a British constitution.

225. I have observed the affectation, which 20 for many years past has prevailed in Paris even to a degree perfectly childish, of idolising the memory of your Henry the Fourth. If anything could put one out of humour with that ornament to the kingly character, it would be this overdone style of insidious panegyric. The persons who have worked this engine the most busily are those who have ended their panegyrics in dethroning his successor and descendant; a man as good-natured, at the least, as 30 Henry the Fourth; altogether as fond of his people; and who has done infinitely more to correct the ancient vices of the state than that great monarch did, or we are sure he ever meant to do. Well it is for his panegyrists that they have not him to deal with. For Henry of Navarre was a resolute, active, and politic prince. He possessed indeed great humanity and mildness; but a humanity and mildness that never stood in the way of his interests. He never sought to be loved without putting himself first in a condition to be feared.

He used soft language with determined conduct. He asserted and maintained his authority in the gross, and distributed his acts of concession only in the detail. He spent the income of his prerogative nobly; but he took care not to break in upon the capital; never abandoning for a moment any of the claims which he made under the fundamental laws, nor sparing to shed the blood of those who opposed him, often in the field, sometimes upon the scaffold. Because he knew how to make his virtues respected by the ungrateful, he has merited the praises of those whom, if they had lived in his time, he would have shut up in the Bastile, and brought to punishment along with the regicides whom he hanged after he had famished Paris into a surrender.

226. If these panegyrists are in earnest in their admiration of Henry the Fourth, they must remember that they cannot think more highly 20 of him than he did of the noblesse of France; whose virtue, honour, courage, patriotism, and loyalty were his constant theme.

227. But the nobility of France are degenerated since the days of Henry the Fourth. That is possible. But it is more than I can believe to be true in any great degree. I do not pretend to know France as correctly as some others; but I have endeavoured through my whole life to make myself acquainted with human nature; otherwise I should be unfit to take even my humble part in the service of mankind. In that study I could not pass by a vast portion of our nature, as it appeared modified in a country but twenty-four miles from the shore of this island. On my best observation, compared with my best inquiries, I found your nobility for the greater part composed of men of high spirit, and of a delicate sense of honour, both with regard to themselves 30

He would have maintained his authority,

and would have imprisoned these men.

and was wont to praise the nobility.

But, they say, the order has degenerated.

I found them high-spirited,

obliging,

affable,

with a high code of honour, and a knowledge of letters.

Towards those beneath them they were less reserved than our nobles;

violence was unknown.

The faults were in the system of tenure.

The men were not worse than others.

individually, and with regard to their whole corps, over whom they kept, beyond what is common in other countries, a censorial eye. They were tolerably well bred; very officious, humane, and hospitable; in their conversation frank and open; with a good military tone; and reasonably tinctured with literature, particularly of the authors in their own language. Many had pretensions far above this description. I speak of those who were generally met with.

228. As to their behaviour to the inferior classes, they appeared to me to comport themselves towards them with good nature, and with something more nearly approaching to familiarity than is generally practised with us in the intercourse between the higher and lower ranks of life. To strike any person, even in the most abject condition, was a thing in a manner unknown, and would be highly disgraceful. Instances of other ill-treatment of the humble part of the community were rare; and as to attacks made upon the property or the personal liberty of the commons, I never heard of any whatsoever from *them*; nor, whilst the laws were in vigour under the ancient government, would such tyranny in subjects have been permitted. As men of landed estates, I had no fault to find with their conduct, though much to reprehend, and much to wish changed, in many of the old tenures. Where the letting of their land was by rent, I could not discover that their agreements with their farmers were oppressive; nor when they were in partnership with the farmer, as often was the case, have I heard that they had taken the lion's share. The proportions seemed not inequitable. There might be exceptions; but certainly they were exceptions only. I have no reason to believe that in these respects the landed noblesse of France were worse than the landed gentry of this country;

certainly in no respect more vexatious than the landholders, not noble, of their own nation. In cities the nobility had no manner of power ; in the country very little. You know, Sir, that much of the civil government, and the police in the most essential parts, was not in the hands of that nobility which presents itself first to our consideration. The revenue, the system and collection of which were the most grievous parts of the French government, was 10 not administered by the men of the sword ; nor were they answerable for the vices of its principle or the vexations, where any such existed, in its management.

229. Denying, as I am well warranted to do, that the nobility had any considerable share in the oppression of the people in cases in which real oppression existed, I am ready to admit that they were not without considerable faults and errors. A foolish imitation 20 of the worst part of the manners of England, which impaired their natural character, without substituting in its place what perhaps they meant to copy, has certainly rendered them worse than formerly they were. Habitual dissoluteness of manners continued beyond the pardonable period of life, was more common amongst them than it is with us ; and it reigned with the less hope of remedy, though possibly with something of less mischief, by being 30 covered with more exterior decorum. They countenanced too much that licentious philosophy which has helped to bring on their ruin. There was another error amongst them more fatal. Those of the commons who approached to or exceeded many of the nobility in point of wealth, were not fully admitted to the rank and estimation which wealth, in reason and good policy, ought to bestow in every country ; though I think not equally with that of other 40 nobility. The two kinds of aristocracy were

And their  
share of power  
was not too great.

They were not  
collectors of re-  
venue.

They com-mit-  
ted errors,

in conduct and  
belief

The line of  
demarcation from  
the next in rank  
was too rigid.

too punctiliosely kept asunder; less so, however, than in Germany and some other nations.

This separation of classes was wrong but could have been corrected by the assembly and by public opinion.

So also of other errors.

The attacks are insincere.

To cling to old privileges is not criminal.

Nobility is the ornament of society.

Levellers are an ignoble class.

230. This separation, as I have already taken the liberty of suggesting to you, I conceive to be one principal cause of the destruction of the old nobility. The military, particularly, was too exclusively reserved for men of family. But, after all, this was an error of opinion, which a conflicting opinion would have rectified. A permanent assembly, in which the commons had their share of power, would soon abolish whatever was too invidious and insulting in these distinctions; and even the faults in the morals of the nobility would have been probably corrected, by the greater varieties of occupation and pursuit to which a constitution by orders would have given rise.

10 20 30 40

231. All this violent cry against the nobility I take to be a mere work of art. To be honoured and even privileged by the laws, opinions, and inveterate usages of our country, growing out of the prejudice of ages, has nothing to provoke horror and indignation in any man. Even to be too tenacious of those privileges is not absolutely a crime. The strong struggle in every individual to preserve possession of what he has found to belong to him, and to distinguish him, is one of the securities against injustice and despotism implanted in our nature. It operates as an instinct to secure property, and to preserve communities in a settled state. What is there to shock in this?

Nobility is a graceful ornament to the civil order. It is the Corinthian capital of polished society. *Omnes boni nobilitati semper favemus*, was the saying of a wise and good man. It is indeed one sign of a liberal and benevolent mind to incline to it with some sort of partial propensity. He feels no ennobling principle in his own heart, who wishes to level all the artificial institutions which have been adopted

for giving a body to opinion, and permanence to fugitive esteem. It is a sour, malignant, envious disposition, without taste for the reality, or for any image or representation of virtue, that sees with joy the unmerited fall of what had long flourished in splendour and in honour. I do not like to see anything destroyed; any void produced in society; any ruin on the face of the land. It was therefore with no disappointment or dissatisfaction that my inquiries and observations did not present to me any incorrigible vices in the noblesse of France, or any abuse which could not be removed by a reform very short of abolition. Your noblesse did not deserve punishment: but to degrade is to punish.

The ruin of  
the splendid  
delights only the  
envious.

232. It was with the same satisfaction I found that the result of my inquiry concerning your clergy was not dissimilar. It is no soothing news to my ears, that great bodies of men are incurably corrupt. It is not with much credulity I listen to any, when they speak evil of those whom they are going to plunder. I rather suspect that vices are feigned or exaggerated, when profit is looked for in their punishment. An enemy is a bad witness; a robber is a worse. Vices and abuses there were undoubtedly in that order, and must be. It was an old establishment, and not frequently revised. But I saw no crimes in the individuals that merited confiscation of their subsfance, nor those cruel insults and degradations, and that unnatural persecution, which have been substituted in the place of meliorating regulation.

Similarly o f  
the clergy;

their constitutio-  
tion was not suf-  
ficiently revised;

233. If there had been any just cause for this new religious persecution, the atheistic

but there was  
nothing to justify  
persecution.

The new  
atheists wish to

proclaim evils.

They have to go back to past history.

To punish men for former holders of office is a new method.

The clergy-men of to-day denounce these old crimes.

Such principle (of punishing successors) is wrong,

and would justify endless international war.

libellers, who act as trumpeters to animate the populace to plunder, do not love any body so much as not to dwell with complacence on the vices of the existing clergy. This they have not done. They find themselves obliged to rake into the histories of former ages (which they have ransacked with a malignant and profligate industry) for every instance of oppression and persecution which has been made by that

body or in its favour, in order to justify, upon very iniquitous, because very illogical, principles of retaliation, their own persecutions, and their own cruelties. After destroying all other genealogies and family distinctions, they

invent a sort of pedigree of crimes. It is not very just to chastise men for the offences of their natural ancestors: but to take the fiction of ancestry in a corporate succession, as a ground for punishing men who have no relation to

guilty acts, except in names and general descriptions, is a sort of refinement in injustice belonging to the philosophy of this enlightened age. The Assembly punishes men, many, if not most, of whom abhor the violent conduct

of ecclesiastics in former times as much as their present persecutors can do, and who would be as loud and as strong in the expression of that sense, if they were not well aware of the purposes for which all this declamation is employed.

234. Corporate bodies are immortal for the good of the members, but not for their punishment. Nations themselves are such corporations. As well might we in England think of waging inexpiable war upon all Frenchmen for the evils which they have brought upon us in the several periods of our mutual hostilities. You might, on your part, think yourselves justified in falling upon all Englishmen on account of the unparalleled calamities brought on the people of France by the unjust invasions of our Henrys

40

and our Edwards. Indeed we should be mutually justified in this exterminatory war upon each other, full as much as you are in the unprovoked persecution of your present countrymen, on account of the conduct of men of the same name in other times.

235. We do not draw the moral lessons we might from history. On the contrary, without care it may be used to vitiate our minds and to destroy our happiness. In history a great 10 volume is unrolled for our instruction, drawing the materials of future wisdom from the past errors and infirmities of mankind. It may, in perversion, serve for a magazine, furnishing offensive and defensive weapons for parties in church and state, and supplying the means of keeping alive, or reviving, dissensions and animosities, and adding fuel to civil fury. History consists, for the greater part, of the miseries brought upon the world by pride, ambition, 20 avarice, revenge, lust, sedition, hypocrisy, ungoverned zeal, and all the train of disorderly appetites which shake the public with the same

“troubulous storms that toss  
The private state, and render life unsweet.”

These vices are the *causes* of those storms. Religion, morals, laws, prerogatives, privileges, liberties, rights of men, are the *pretexts*. The pretexts are always found in some specious appearance of a real good. You would not 30 secure men from tyranny and sedition, by rooting out of the mind the principles to which these fraudulent pretexts apply? If you did, you would root out everything that is valuable in the human breast. As these are the pretexts, so the ordinary actors and instruments in great public evils are kings, priests, magistrates, senates, parliaments, national assemblies, judges, and captains. You would not cure the evil by resolving that there should be no more monarchs, nor ministers of state, nor of the gospel; 40

History is full of beneficial lessons; but it may be perverted.

The real cause of misery is personal guilt;

but specious pretences are always alleged.

The evils would not be cured by uprooting the principles behind the pretences,

or the public offices by which deeds are done.

Power must continue.

But the fundamental vices should be dealt with.

Offices and fashions are as the shell of history.

The spirit of evil continues to operate, in ever-changing forms of vice.

Some think they are suppressing, while they are really fostering, such vices.

An example.

The Parisians cruelly slaughtered the Huguenots.

no interpreters of law; no general officers; no public councils. You might change the names. The things in some shape must remain. A certain *quantum* of power must always exist in the community, in some hands, and under some appellation. Wise men will apply their remedies to vices, not to names; to the causes of evil which are permanent, not to the occasional organs by which they act, and the transitory modes in which they appear. Otherwise you will be wise historically, a fool in practice. Seldom have two ages the same fashion in their pretexts and the same modes of mischief. Wickedness is a little more inventive. Whilst you are discussing fashion, the fashion is gone by. The very same vice assumes a new body. The spirit transmigrates; and, far from losing its principle of life by the change of its appearance, it is renovated in its new organs with a fresh vigour of a juvenile activity. It walks abroad, it continues its ravages, whilst you are gibbeting the carcase, or demolishing the tomb. You are terrifying yourselves with ghosts and apparitions, whilst your house is the haunt of robbers. It is thus with all those who, attending only to the shell and husk of history, think they are waging war with intolerance, pride, and cruelty, whilst, under colour of abhorring the ill principles of antiquated parties, they are authorising and feeding the same odious vices in different factions, and perhaps in worse.

Your citizens of Paris formerly had lent themselves as the ready instruments to slaughter the followers of Calvin, at the infamous massacre of St. Bartholomew. What should we say to those who could think of retaliating on the Parisians of this day the abominations and horrors of that time? They are indeed brought to abhor *that* massacre. Ferocious as they are, it is not difficult to make them

dislike it; because the politicians and fashionable teachers have no interest in giving their passions exactly the same direction. Still, however, they find it their interest to keep the same savage dispositions alive. It was but the other day that they caused this very massacre to be acted on the stage for the diversion of the descendants of those who committed it. In this tragic farce they produced the cardinal of Lorraine in his robes of function, ordering general slaughter. Was this spectacle intended to make the Parisians abhor persecution, and loathe the effusion of blood?—No; it was to teach them to persecute their own pastors; it was to excite them, by raising a disgust and horror of their clergy, to an alacrity in hunting down to destruction an order which, if it ought to exist at all, ought to exist not only in safety, but in reverence. It was to stimulate their cannibal appetites (which 20 one would think had been gorged sufficiently) by variety and seasoning; and to quicken them to an alertness in new murders and massacres, if it should suit the purpose of the Guises of the day. An assembly, in which sat a multitude of priests and prelates, was obliged to suffer this indignity at its door. The author was not sent to the galleys, nor the players to the house of correction. Not long after this exhibition, those players came forward to the Assembly to claim the rites of that very religion which they had dared to expose, and to show their prostituted faces in the senate, whilst the archbishop of Paris, whose function was known to his people only by his prayers and benedictions, and his wealth only by his alms, is forced to abandon his house, and to fly from his flock (as from ravenous wolves), because, truly, in the sixteenth century, the cardinal of Lorraine was a rebel and a murderer.<sup>1</sup>

They now condemn that crime;

and they have even acted it on the stage in order to stimulate the same cruelty.

30 These comedians are treated with respect while the pious and venerable archbishop is banished.

<sup>1</sup> This is on a supposition of the truth of this story, but he was not in France at the time. One name serves as well as another.

This has followed from perverting history.

To the philosopher these old priests and you revolutionaries are the same in guilt.

Next century will abhor you also

and will warn against crimes of retaliation,

on account of the abuses of false philosophers or priests.

If your clergy had been criminal we should be less indignant.

237. Such is the effect of the perversion of history by those who, for the same nefarious purposes, have perverted every other part of learning. But those who will stand upon that elevation of reason, which places centuries under our eye, and brings things to the true point of comparison, which obscures little names, and effaces the colours of little parties, and to which nothing can ascend but the spirit and moral

10 quality of human actions, will say to the teachers of the Palais Royal,—The cardinal of Lorraine was the murderer of the sixteenth century, you have the glory of being the murderers in the eighteenth; and this is the only difference between you. But history in the nineteenth century, better understood, and better employed, will, I trust, teach a civilised posterity to abhor the misdeeds of both these barbarous ages. It will teach future priests and  
 20 magistrates not to retaliate upon the speculative and inactive atheists of future times, the enormities committed by the present practical zealots and furious fanatics of that wretched error, which, in its quiescent state, is more than punished, whenever it is embraced. It will teach posterity not to make war upon either religion or philosophy, for the abuse which the hypocrites of both have made of the two most valuable blessings conferred upon us by the bounty of the universal Patron, who in all things eminently favours and protects the race of man.

238. If your clergy, or any clergy, should show themselves vicious beyond the fair bounds allowed to human infirmity, and to those professional faults which can hardly be separated from professional virtues, though their vices never can countenance the exercise of oppression, I do admit that they would naturally have the effect of abating very much of our indignation  
 40 against the tyrants who exceed measure and justice in their punishment. I can allow in

clergymen, through all their divisions, some tenaciousness of their own opinion, some over-flowings of zeal for its propagation, some pre-dilection to their own state and office, some attachment to the interest of their own corps, some preference to those who listen with docility to their doctrines, beyond those who scorn and deride them. I allow all this, because I am a man who have to deal with men, and who would not, through a violence of toleration, run into the greatest of all intolerance. I must bear with infirmities until they fester into crimes.

239. Undoubtedly, the natural progress of the passions, from frailty to vice, ought to be prevented by a watchful eye and a firm hand. But is it true that the body of your clergy had past those limits of a just allowance? From the general style of your late publications of all sorts, one would be led to believe that your clergy in France were a sort of monsters; a horrible composition of superstition, ignorance, sloth, fraud, avarice, and tyranny. But is this true? Is it true, that the lapse of time, the cessation of conflicting interests, the woeful experience of the evils resulting from party rage, have had no sort of influence gradually to meliorate their minds? Is it true, that they were daily renewing invasions on the civil power, troubling the domestic quiet of their country, and rendering the operations of its government feeble and precarious? Is it true, that the clergy of our times have pressed down the laity with an iron hand, and were, in all places, lighting up the fires of a savage persecution? Did they by every fraud endeavour to increase their estates? Did they use to exceed the due demands on estates that were their own? Or, rigidly screwing up right into wrong, did they convert a legal claim into a vexatious extortion? When not possessed of power, were they filled

10  
Some allowance must be made for partiality or prejudice.

We must be practical.

20  
Developments of evil should be carefully watched; but the present accusations are not sustained:

party-spirit,

30  
encroachment

persecution,

40  
fraud and extortion,

- envy,
- quarrelsome-  
ness,
- intolerant  
self-assertion.
- The above  
evils may have  
once existed.
- Now there is  
improvement  
everywhere; and  
the clergy should  
be praised for  
cultivating a  
more tolerant  
disposition.
- When in  
France I made  
inquiries.
- I heard little  
against them.
- with the vices of those who envy it? Were they inflamed with a violent, litigious spirit of controversy? Goaded on with the ambition of intellectual sovereignty, were they ready to fly in the face of all magistracy, to fire churches, to massacre the priests of other descriptions, to pull down altars, and to make their way over the ruins of subverted governments to an empire of doctrine, sometimes flattering, sometimes forcing, the consciences of men from the jurisdiction of public institutions into a submission to their personal authority, beginning with a claim of liberty, and ending with an abuse of power?
240. These, or some of these, were the vices objected, and not wholly without foundation, to several of the churchmen of former times, who belonged to the two great parties which then divided and distracted Europe.
241. If there was in France, as in other countries there visibly is, a great abatement, rather than any increase of these vices, instead of loading the present clergy with the crimes of other men, and the odious character of other times, in common equity they ought to be praised, encouraged, and supported, in their departure from a spirit which disgraced their predecessors, and for having assumed a temper of mind and manners more suitable to their sacred function.
242. When my occasions took me into France, towards the close of the late reign, the clergy, under all their forms, engaged a considerable part of my curiosity. So far from finding (except from one set of men, not then very numerous, though very active) the complaints and discontents against that body which some publications had given me reason to expect, I perceived little or no public or private uneasiness on their account. On further examination, I found the clergy, in general, persons of

moderate minds and decorous manners; I include the世俗的, and the regulars of both sexes. I had not the good fortune to know a great many of the parochial clergy; but in general I received a perfectly good account of their morals, and of their attention to their duties. With some of the higher clergy I had a personal acquaintance; and of the rest in that class, a very good means of information. They were, almost all of them, persons of noble birth. They resembled others of their own rank; and where there was any difference, it was in their favour. They were more fully educated than the military noblesse; so as by no means to disgrace their profession by ignorance, or by want of fitness for the exercise of their authority. They seemed to me, beyond the clerical character, liberal and open; with the hearts of gentlemen, and men of honour; neither insolent nor servile in their manners and conduct. They seemed to me rather a superior class; a set of men amongst whom you would not be surprised to find a *Fénelon*. I saw among the clergy in Paris (many of the description are not to be met with anywhere) men of great learning and candour; and I had reason to believe that this description was not confined to Paris. What I found in other places, I know was accidental; and therefore to be presumed a fair sample. I spent a few days in a provincial town, where, in the absence of the bishop, I passed my evenings with three clergymen, his vicars-general, persons who would have done honour to any church. They were all well informed; two of them of deep, general, and extensive erudition, ancient and modern, oriental and western; particularly in their own profession. They had a more extensive knowledge of our English divines than I expected; and they entered into the genius of those writers with a critical accuracy. One of these

I found the general body moderate, decorous and attentive to duty.

10

The higher clergy were nearly all noble, and superior to the average nobles.

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They seemed liberal and honourable; some notable for goodness,

30

others for scholarship.

So also through the country.

40

I met three, of whom two were extensively learned.

A personal tribute.

Such men deserve respect and gratitude,

and the present is a fit time for showing it.

Of your bishops a few were very eminent, and an equally small few unworthy.

Self-denial is demanded most

gentlemen is since dead, the Abbé *Morangis*. I pay this tribute, without reluctance, to the memory of that noble, reverend, learned, and excellent person; and I should do the same, with equal cheerfulness, to the merits of the others, who I believe are still living, if I did not fear to hurt those whom I am unable to serve.

243. Some of these ecclesiastics of rank are, by all titles, persons deserving of general respect. They are deserving of gratitude from me, and from many English. If this letter should ever come into their hands, I hope they will believe there are those of our nation who feel for their unmerited fall, and for the cruel confiscation of their fortunes, with no common sensibility. What I say of them is a testimony, as far as one feeble voice can go, which I owe to truth. Whenever the question of this unnatural persecution is concerned, I will pay it. No one shall prevent me from being just and grateful. The time is fitted for the duty; and it is particularly becoming to show our justice and gratitude, when those who have deserved well of us and of mankind are labouring under popular obloquy, and the persecutions of oppressive power.

244. You had before your Revolution about a hundred and twenty bishops. A few of them were men of eminent sanctity, and charity without limit. When we talk of the heroic, of course we talk of rare virtue. I believe the instances of eminent depravity may be as rare amongst them as those of transcendent goodness. Examples of avarice and of licentiousness may be picked out, I do not question it, by those who delight in the investigation which leads to such discoveries. A man as old as I am will not be astonished that several, in every description, do not lead that perfect life of self-denial, with regard to wealth or to pleasure, which is wished for by all, by some expected,

but by none exacted with more rigour than by those who are the most attentive to their own interests, or the most indulgent to their own passions. When I was in France, I am certain that the number of vicious prelates was not great. Certain individuals among them, not distinguishable for the regularity of their lives, made some amends for their want of the severe virtues, in their possession of the liberal ; and were endowed with qualities which made them useful in the church and state. I am told that, with few exceptions, Louis the Sixteenth had been more attentive to character, in his promotions to that rank, than his immediate predecessor; and I believe (as some spirit of reform has prevailed through the whole reign) that it may be true. But the present ruling power has shown a disposition only to plunder the church. It has punished *all* prelates ; which is to favour the vicious, at least in point of reputation. It has made a degrading pensionary establishment, to which no man of liberal ideas or liberal condition will destine his children. It must settle into the lowest classes of the people. As with you the inferior clergy are not numerous enough for their duties ; as these duties are, beyond measure, minute and toilsome, as you have left no middle classes of clergy at their ease, in future nothing of science or erudition can exist in the Gallican church. To complete the project, without the least attention to the rights of patrons, the Assembly has provided in future an elective clergy ; an arrangement which will drive out of the clerical profession all men of sobriety ; all who can pretend to independence in their function or their conduct ; and which will throw the whole direction of the public mind into the hands of a set of licentious, bold, crafty, factious, flattering wretches, of such condition and such habits of life as will make their

by those who are most self-indulgent.

Compensating qualities.

10

Usually the crown was careful in great appointments.

20

This revolution punishes all.

30

Hereafter none of high birth will become clergymen ;

and toil will kill scholarship.

40

And the new method of election will put power into wrong hands;

and produce  
mean intrigue.

Now bishops  
will be appointed  
by all sorts of  
men,

who do not in-  
quire into doctrine  
or character,

and clergymen  
may now believe  
what they choose.

The new ar-  
rangements are  
intended to lower  
regard for reli-  
gion, with a view  
to ultimate abo-  
lition.

Its place is to  
be supplied by  
what they call  
civic education,  
based on physical  
wants and

contemptible pensions (in comparison of which  
the stipend of an exciseman is lucrative and  
honourable) an object of low and illiberal  
intrigue. Those officers, whom they still call  
bishops, are to be elected to a provision com-  
paratively mean, through the same arts (that  
is, electioneering arts), by men of all religious  
tenets that are known or can be invented. The  
new lawgivers have not ascertained anything

10 whatsoever concerning their qualifications, re-  
lative either to doctrine or to morals; no more  
than they have done with regard to the subor-  
dinate clergy; nor does it appear but that both  
the higher and the lower may, at their discre-  
tion, practise or preach any mode of religion or  
irreligion that they please. I do not yet see  
what the jurisdiction of bishops over their  
subordinates is to be, or whether they are to  
have any jurisdiction at all.

20 245. In short, Sir, it seems to me that this  
new ecclesiastical establishment is intended  
only to be temporary, and preparatory to the  
utter abolition, under any of its forms, of the  
Christian religion, whenever the minds of men  
are prepared for this last stroke against it, by  
the accomplishment of the plan for bringing its  
ministers into universal contempt. They who  
will not believe that the philosophical fanatics  
who guide in these matters have long enter-

30 tained such a design, are utterly ignorant of  
their character and proceedings. These enthu-  
siasts do not scruple to avow their opinion  
that a state can subsist without any religion  
better than with one; and that they are able to  
supply the place of any good which may be in  
it, by a project of their own—namely, by a sort  
of education they have imagined, founded in a  
knowledge of the physical wants of men; pro-  
gressively carried to an enlightened self-inte-  
rest, which, when well understood, they  
40 tell us, will identify with an interest more

enlarged and public. The scheme of this education has been long known. Of late they distinguish it (as they have got an entirely new nomenclature of technical terms) by the name of a *Civic Education*.

246. I hope their partisans in England (to whom I rather attribute very inconsiderate conduct, than the ultimate object in this detestable design) will succeed neither in the pillage of the ecclesiastics, nor in the introduction of a 10 principle of popular election to our bishoprics and parochial cures. This, in the present condition of the world, would be the last corruption of the church; the utter ruin of the clerical character; the most dangerous shock that the state ever received through a misunderstood arrangement of religion. I know well enough that the bishoprics and cures, under kingly and seignoral patronage, as now they are in England, and as they have been lately in France, are sometimes acquired by unworthy methods; but the other mode of ecclesiastical canvass subjects them infinitely more surely and more generally to all the evil arts of low ambition, which, operating on and through greater numbers, will produce mischief in proportion.

247. Those of you who have robbed the clergy, think that they shall easily reconcile their conduct to all Protestant nations; because the clergy, whom they have thus plundered, degraded, and given over to mockery and scorn, are of the Roman Catholic, that is, of *their own* pretended persuasion. I have no doubt that some miserable bigots will be found here, as well as elsewhere, who hate sects and parties different from their own, more than they love the substance of religion; and who are more angry with those who differ from them in their particular plans and systems, than displeased with those who attack the foundation of our

enlightened self-interest.

I trust the evils of pillage and popular election will not be found here.

By them the State would receive a shock.

Canvassing for high and sacred offices would admit much evil.

You think Protestants won't care.

There are some such, who regard their own system more highly than the fundamental faith.

An illustration  
from the past:

want of true  
sincerity in  
France;

dallying with  
unbelief against  
Protestantism.

The evil re-  
sults: they in  
turn are over-  
thrown.

Our Reformers  
were sincere:  
ready to die for  
Protestantism  
or for Christianity.

They would  
have abhorred  
your leaders.

common hope. These men will write and speak on the subject in the manner that is to be expected from their temper and character. Burnet says, that when he was in France, in the year 1683, "the method which carried over the men of the finest parts to Popery was this—they brought themselves to doubt of the whole Christian religion. When that was once done, it seemed a more indifferent thing of what side or form they continued outwardly." If this was then the ecclesiastical policy of France, it is what they have since but too much reason to repent of. They preferred atheism to a form of religion not agreeable to their ideas. They succeeded in destroying that form; and atheism has succeeded in destroying them. I can readily give credit to Burnet's story; because I have observed too much of a similar spirit (for a little of it is "much too much") amongst ourselves. The humour, however, is not general.

248. The teachers who reformed our religion in England bore no sort of resemblance to your present reforming doctors in Paris. Perhaps they were (like those whom they opposed) rather more than could be wished under the influence of a party spirit; but they were more sincere believers; men of the most fervent and exalted piety; ready to die 30 (as some of them did die) like true heroes in defence of their particular ideas of Christianity; as they would with equal fortitude, and more cheerfully, for that stock of general truth, for the branches of which they contended with their blood. These men would have disavowed with horror those wretches who claimed a fellowship with them upon no other titles than those of their having pillaged the persons with whom they maintained controversies, and their 40 having despised the common religion, for the purity of which they exerted themselves with

a zeal which unequivocally bespoke their highest reverence for the substance of that system which they wished to reform. Many of their descendants have retained the same zeal, but (as less engaged in conflict) with more moderation. They do not forget that justice and mercy are substantial parts of religion. Impious men do not recommend themselves to their communion by iniquity and cruelty towards any description of their fellow-creatures.

10

They were zealous; and their descendants equally hate impiety, iniquity and cruelty.

249. We hear these new teachers continually boasting of their spirit of toleration. That those persons should tolerate all opinions, who think none to be of estimation, is a matter of small merit. Equal neglect is not impartial kindness. The species of benevolence, which arises from contempt, is no true charity. There are in England abundance of men who tolerate in the true spirit of toleration. They think the dogmas of religion, though in different degrees, are all of moment; and that amongst them there is, as amongst all things of value, a just ground of preference. They favour, therefore, and they tolerate. They tolerate, not because they despise opinions, but because they respect justice. They would reverently and affectionately protect all religions, because they love and venerate the great principle upon which they all agree, and the great object to which they are all directed. They begin more and more plainly to discern that we have all a common cause, as against a common enemy. They will not be so misled by the spirit of faction as not to distinguish what is done in favour of their subdivision, from those acts of hostility which, through some particular description, are aimed at the whole corps, in which they themselves, under another denomination, are included. It is impossible for me to say what may be the character of every description of men amongst us. But I speak

20

Your men boast of toleration.

There is a false toleration;

and a true,

which is due to regard for justice, and love of religion.

30

We see that there is a common cause,

and a common enemy,

40

and will have nothing to do with sacrilege and proscription.

for the greater part; and for them, I must tell you, that sacrilege is no part of their doctrine of good works; that, so far from calling you into their fellowship on such title, if your professors are admitted to their communion, they must carefully conceal their doctrine of the lawfulness of the proscription of innocent men; and that they must make restitution of all stolen goods whatsoever. Till then they  
10 are none of ours.

250. You may suppose that we do not approve your confiscation of the revenues of bishops, and deans, and chapters, and parochial clergy possessing independent estates arising from land, because we have the same sort of establishment in England. That objection, you will say, cannot hold as to the confiscation of the goods of monks and nuns, and the abolition of their order. It is true that this parti-

20 cular part of your general confiscation does not affect England, as a precedent in point; but the reason implies, and it goes a great way. The long parliament confiscated the lands of deans and chapters in England on the same ideas upon which your assembly set to sale the lands of the monastic orders. But it is in the principle of injustice that the danger lies, and not in the description of persons on whom it is first exercised. I see, in a country very near us,

30 a course of policy pursued which sets justice, the common concern of mankind, at defiance. With the National Assembly of France, possession is nothing, law and usage are nothing. I see the National Assembly openly reprobate the doctrine of prescription, which one of the greatest of their own lawyers<sup>1</sup> tells us, with great truth, is a part of the law of nature. He tells us, that the positive ascertainment of its limits, and its security from invasion, were  
40 among the causes for which civil society itself

You think we will not object to the confiscation of monasteries.

Our long parliament made confiscations.

But the danger is in deliberate injustice.

Your Assembly owns prescription,

which is a law of nature.

<sup>1</sup> Domat.

has been instituted. If prescription be once shaken, no species of property is secure, when it once becomes an object large enough to tempt the cupidity of indigent power. I see a practice perfectly correspondent to their contempt of this great fundamental part of natural law. I see the confiscators begin with bishops, and chapters, and monasteries; but I do not see them end there. I see the princes of the blood, who, by the oldest usages of that kingdom, held large landed estates (hardly with the compliment of a debate), deprived of their possessions, and, in lieu of their stable, independent property, reduced to the hope of some precarious, charitable pension, at the pleasure of an assembly which of course will pay little regard to the rights of pensioners at pleasure, when it despises those of legal proprietors.Flushed with the insolence of their first inglorious victories, and pressed by the distresses caused by their lust of unhallowed lucre, disappointed but not discouraged, they have at length ventured completely to subvert all property of all descriptions throughout the extent of a great kingdom. They have compelled all men, in all transactions of commerce, in the disposal of lands, in civil dealing, and through the whole communion of life, to accept as perfect payment and good and lawful tender, the symbols of their speculations on a projected sale of their plunder. What vestiges of liberty or property have they left? The tenant-right of a cabbage-garden, a year's interest in a hovel, the good-will of an ale-house or a baker's shop, the very shadow of a constructive property, are more ceremoniously treated in our parliament, than with you the oldest and most valuable landed possessions, in the hands of the most respectable personages, or than the whole body of the moneyed and commercial interest of your country. We entertain a high opinion of the

The re a fter  
nothing is secure.

Now princes  
are deprived o f  
estates,

and receive  
uncertain pen-  
sions.

All property is  
being subverted,

. and all have  
to accept symbols  
of plunder.

No t hing of  
liberty is secure.

Legislative  
authority here  
would never  
dream of such  
things.

You, who could endure no restraint, are now utter tyrants.

You put the assembly above law, and it is proving destructive.

A former instance of epidemic anarchism.

Wisdom has no counteractive to such fury.

The present is an atheistic fanaticism,

producing an atrocity of mind

in a time of great distress,

legislative authority ; but we have never dreamt that parliaments had any right whatever to violate property, to overrule prescription, or to force a currency of their own fiction in the place of that which is real, and recognised by the law of nations. But you, who began with refusing to submit to the most moderate restraints, have ended by establishing an unheard-of despotism.

10 I find the ground upon which your confiscators go is this : that indeed their proceedings could not be supported in a court of justice ; but that the rules of prescription cannot bind a legislative assembly.<sup>1</sup> So that this legislative assembly of a free nation sits, not for the security, but for the destruction, of property, and not of property only, but of every rule and maxim which can give it stability, and of those instruments which can alone give it circulation.

20 251. When the Anabaptists of Münster, in the sixteenth century, had filled Germany with confusion, by their system of levelling, and their wild opinions concerning property, to what country in Europe did not the progress of their fury furnish just cause of alarm ? Of all things, wisdom is the most terrified with epidemical fanaticism, because of all enemies it is that against which she is the least able to furnish any kind of resource. We cannot be ignorant of the spirit of atheistical fanaticism, 30 that is inspired by a multitude of writings, dispersed with incredible assiduity and expense, and by sermons delivered in all the streets and places of public resort in Paris. These writings and sermons have filled the populace with a black and savage atrocity of mind, which supersedes in them the common feelings of nature, as well as all sentiments of morality and religion ; insomuch that these wretches are induced to bear with a sullen patience the 40 intolerable distresses brought upon them by

<sup>1</sup> Speech of Mr. Camus, published by order of the National Assembly.

the violent convulsions and permutations that have been made in property.<sup>1</sup> The spirit of proselytism attends this spirit of fanaticism. They have societies to cabal and correspond at home and abroad for the propagation of their tenets. The republic of Berne, one of the happiest, the most prosperous, and the best governed countries upon earth, is one of the great objects at the destruction of which they aim. I am told they have in some measure succeeded in sowing there the seeds of discontent. They are busy throughout Germany. Spain and Italy have not been untried. England is not left out of the comprehensive scheme of their malignant charity: and in England we find those who stretch out their arms to them, who recommend their example from more than one pulpit, and who choose in more than one periodical meeting publicly to correspond with them, to applaud them, and to hold them up as objects for imitation; who receive from them tokens of confraternity, and standards consecrated amidst their rights and mysteries;<sup>2</sup> who suggest to them leagues of perpetual

and endeavouring to communicate itself to all countries;

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not without effect.

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And here some applaud them, and exchange tokens,

<sup>1</sup> Whether the following description is strictly true, I know not; but it is what the publishers would have pass for true, in order to animate others. In a letter from Toul, given in one of their papers, is the following passage concerning the people of that district: "Dans la Révolution actuelle, ils ont résisté à toutes les séductions du bigotisme, aux persécutions, et aux tracasseries des ennemis de la Révolution. Oubliant leurs plus grands intérêts pour rendre hommage aux vues d'ordre général qui ont déterminé l'Assemblée Nationale, ils voient, sans se plaindre, supprimer cette foule d'établissements ecclésiastiques par lesquels ils subsistaient; et même, en perdant leur siège épiscopal, la seule de toutes ces ressources qui pouvoit, ou plutôt qui devoit, en toute équité, leur être conservée; condamnés à la plus effrayante misère, sans avoir été ni pu être entendus, ils ne murmurent point, ils restent fidèles aux principes du plus pur patriotisme; ils sont encore prêts à verser leur sang pour le maintien de la Constitution, qui va réduire leur ville à la plus déplorable nullité." These people are not supposed to have endured those sufferings and injustices in a struggle for liberty, for the same account states truly that they had been always free; their patience in beggary and ruin, and their suffering, without remonstrance, the most flagrant and confessed injustice, if strictly true, can be nothing but the effect of this dire fanaticism. A great multitude all over France is in the same condition and the same temper.

<sup>2</sup> See the proceedings of the confederation at Nantz.

even when war  
is possible.

Confiscation of  
Church property  
would be prelimi-  
nary to larger  
confiscations.

The principle is  
fundamental: no  
one must be allow-  
ed to prey on  
another.

On account of  
national debts, and  
the unpopularity  
of taxes, and the  
demands of the  
monied classes,

amity, at the very time when the power to which our constitution has exclusively delegated the federative capacity of this kingdom, may find it expedient to make war upon them.

252. It is not the confiscation of our church property from this example in France that I dread, though I think this would be no trifling evil. The great source of my solicitude is, lest it should ever be considered in England

- 10 as the policy of a state to seek a resource in confiscations of any kind; or that any one description of citizens should be brought to regard any of the others as their proper prey.<sup>1</sup> Nations are wading deeper and deeper into an ocean of boundless debt. Public debts, which at first were a security to governments, by interesting many in the public tranquillity, are likely in their excess to become the means of their subversion. If governments provide for these debts by heavy impositions, they perish by becoming odious to the people. If they do not provide for them, they will be undone by the efforts of the most dangerous of all parties; I mean an extensive, discontented moneyed interest, injured and not destroyed. The men who compose this interest look for their security, in the first instance, to the fidelity of government; in the second, to its power. If they find the old governments effete, worn out, and with their springs relaxed, so as
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<sup>1</sup> "Si plures sunt ii quibus improbe datum est, quam illi quibus injuste ademptum est, idcirco plus etiam valent? Non enim numero haec judicantur sed pondere. Quam autem habet aequitatem, ut agrum multis annis, aut etiam sacerulis ante possessum, qui nullum habuit habeat; qui autem habuit amittat? Ac, propter hoc injuriæ genus, Lacedæmonii Lysandrum Ephorum expulerunt: Agin regem (quod nunquam antea apud eos acciderat) necaverunt: ex quo eo tempore tanta discordia secutæ sunt, ut et tyranni existerint, et optimates exterminarentur, et preclarissime constituta res publica dilaberetur. Nec vero solum ipsa cecidit, sed etiam reliquam Græciam exvertit contagionibus malorum, quæ a Lacedæmoniis profectæ manarunt latius."—After speaking of the conduct of the model of true patriots, Aratus of Sicyon, which was in a very different spirit, he says, "Sic par est agere cum civibus; non ut bis jam vidimus, hastam in foro ponere et bona civium voci subjicere præconis. At ille Græcus (id quod fuit sapientis et præstantis viri omnibus consulendum esse putavit: eaque est summa ratio et sapientia boni civis, commoda civium non divellere, sed omnes eadem aequitate continere)."—Cic. *Off.*, 1. 2.

not to be of sufficient vigour for their purposes, they may seek new ones that shall be possessed of more energy ; and this energy will be derived, not from an acquisition of resources, but from a contempt of justice. Revolutions are favourable to confiscation ; and it is impossible to know under what obnoxious names the next confiscations will be authorised. I am sure that the principles predominant in France extend to very many persons, and descriptions of persons, in all countries who think their innoxious indolence their security. This kind of innocence in proprietors may be argued into inutility; and inutility into an unfitness for their estates. Many parts of Europe are in open disorder. In many others there is a hollow murmuring under ground ; a confused movement is felt, that threatens a general earthquake in the political world. Already confederacies and correspondencies of the most extraordinary nature are forming, in several countries.<sup>1</sup> In such a state of things we ought to hold ourselves upon our guard. In all mutations (if mutations must be) the circumstance which will serve most to blunt the edge of their mischief, and to promote what good may be in them, is, that they should find us with our minds tenacious of justice, and tender of property.

253. But it will be argued that this confiscation in France ought not to alarm other nations. They say it is not made from wanton rapacity ; that it is a great measure of national policy, adopted to remove an extensive, inveterate, superstitious mischief. It is with the greatest difficulty that I am able to separate policy from justice. Justice itself is the great standing policy of civil society ; and any eminent departure from it, under any circumstances, lies under the suspicion of being no policy at all.

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<sup>1</sup> See two books entitled, *Einige Originalschriften des Illuminatenordens — System und Folgen des Illuminatenordens*. München, 1787.

the dangers are great.

These monied classes may favour revolutions and confiscations.

Some, at present secure, will be pronounced useless and unfit so that they may be robbed.

Convulsions are possible.

Let us meet them with fixed minds.

Another argument: that it is a special necessity, an act of policy in one country.

No policy can overrule justice.

When men adopt a recognised profession the State is under an obligation of honour not to degrade them or disown their work.

Such degradation, along with confiscation, is tyranny.

Is the new treatment expedient and beneficial though unjust?

Old institutions cannot be handled as freely as new beginnings.

They have many connections which may be easily injured.

254. When men are encouraged to go into a certain mode of life by the existing laws, and protected in that mode as in a lawful occupation—when they have accommodated all their ideas and all their habits to it—when the law had long made their adherence to its rules a ground of reputation, and their departure from them a ground of disgrace and even of penalty—I am sure it is unjust in legislature, by an arbitrary act, to offer a sudden violence to their minds and their feelings; forcibly to degrade them from their state and condition, and to stigmatise with shame and infamy that character, and those customs, which before had been made the measure of their happiness and honour. If to this be added an expulsion from their habitations, and a confiscation of all their goods, I am not sagacious enough to discover how this despotic sport, made of the feelings, consciences, prejudices, and properties of men, can be discriminated from the rankest tyranny.
255. If the injustice of the course pursued in France be clear, the policy of the measure, that is, the public benefit to be expected from it, ought to be at least as evident, and at least as important. To a man who acts under the influence of no passion, who has nothing in view in his projects but the public good, a great difference will immediately strike him between what policy would dictate on the original introduction of such institutions, and on a question of their total abolition, where they have cast their roots wide and deep, and where, by long habit, things more valuable than themselves are so adapted to them, and in a manner interwoven with them, that the one cannot be destroyed without notably impairing the other. He might be embarrassed if he case were really such as sophisters represent it in their paltry style of debating. But in this, as in most questions of
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state, there is a middle. There is something else than the mere alternative of absolute destruction, or unreformed existence. *Spartam nactus es; hanc exorna.* This is, in my opinion, a rule of profound sense, and ought never to depart from the mind of an honest reformer. I cannot conceive how any man can have brought himself to that pitch of presumption, to consider his country as nothing but *carte blanche*, upon which he may scribble whatever he pleases. A man full of warm, speculative benevolence may wish his society otherwise constituted than he finds it; but a good patriot, and a true politician, always considers how he shall make the most of the existing materials of his country. A disposition to preserve, and an ability to improve, taken together, would be my standard of a statesman. Everything else is vulgar in the conception, perilous in the execution.

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But destruction is not necessary.

There is a middle way.

No country is as a clean slate.

Existing materials are to be used.

Preservation and improvement should be combined.

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There are occasions of great progress or reform.

256. There are moments in the fortune of states, when particular men are called to make improvements, by great mental exertion. In those moments, even when they seem to enjoy the confidence of their prince and country, and to be invested with full authority, they have not always apt instruments. A politician, to do great things, looks for a *power*, what our workmen call a *purchase*; and if he finds that power, in politics as in mechanics, he cannot be at a loss to apply it. In the monastic institutions, in my opinion, was found a great *power* for the mechanism of politic benevolence. There were revenues with a public direction; there were men wholly set apart and dedicated to public purposes, without any other than public ties and public principles; men without the possibility of converting the estate of the community into a private fortune; men denied to self-interests, whose avarice is for some community; men to whom personal

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Then elements of power are needed.

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Your monasteries were a power, or great means, for the organisation of benevolence.

Such things arise in times of inspiration.

They are as gifts of nature, to be wisely used,

for the benefit of the country.

Many uses were possible.

Your destruction is a moral violation of nature.

Forces of nature are tamed by genius.

You had a great force which

- poverty is honour, and implicit obedience stands in the place of freedom. In vain shall a man look to the possibility of making such things when he wants them. The winds blow as they list. These institutions are the products of enthusiasm; they are the instruments of wisdom. Wisdom cannot create materials; they are the gifts of nature or of chance; her pride is in the use. The perennial existence of bodies corporate and their fortunes are things particularly suited to a man who has long views; who meditates designs that require time in fashioning, and which propose duration when they are accomplished. He is not deserving to rank high, or even to be mentioned in the order of great statesmen, who, having obtained the command and direction of such a power as existed in the wealth, the discipline, and the habits of such corporations, as those 10 of bodies corporate and their fortunes are which you have rashly destroyed, cannot find any way of converting it to the great and lasting benefit of his country. On the view of this subject, a thousand uses suggest themselves to a contriving mind. To destroy any power, growing wild from the rank productive force of the human mind, is almost tantamount, in the moral world, to the destruction of the apparently active properties of bodies in the material. It would be like the attempt to 20 destroy (if it were in our competence to destroy) the expansive force of fixed air in nitre, or the power of steam, or of electricity, or of magnetism. These energies always existed in nature, and they were always discernible. They seemed, some of them unserviceable, some noxious, some no better than a sport to children; until contemplative ability, combining with practic skill, tamed their wild nature, subdued them to use, and rendered them at once 30 the most powerful and the most tractable agents, in subservience to the great views and

designs of men. Did fifty thousand persons, whose mental and whose bodily labour you might direct, and so many hundred thousand a year of a revenue, which was neither lazy nor superstitious, appear too big for your abilities to wield? Had you no way of using the men but by converting monks into pensioners? Had you no way of turning the revenue to account, but through the improvident resource of a spendthrift sale? If you were thus destitute 10 of mental funds, the proceeding is in its natural course. Your politicians do not understand their trade; and therefore they sell their tools.

257. But the institutions savour of superstition in their very principle; and they nourish it by a permanent and standing influence. This I do not mean to dispute; but this ought not to hinder you from deriving from superstition itself any resources which may thence be furnished for the public advantage. You derive benefits from many dispositions and many passions of the human mind, which are of as doubtful a colour, in the moral eye, as superstition itself. It was your business to correct and mitigate everything which was noxious in this passion, as in all the passions. But is superstition the greatest of all possible vices? In its possible excess I think it becomes a very great evil. It is, however, a moral subject; and of course admits of all degrees 20 and all modifications. Superstition is the religion of feeble minds; and they must be tolerated in an intermixture of it, in some trifling or some enthusiastic shape or other, else you will deprive weak minds of a resource found necessary to the strongest. The body of all true religion consists, to be sure, in obedience to the will of the Sovereign of the world; in a confidence in his declarations; and in imitation of his perfections. The rest is our own. It may be prejudicial to the great end; it may be 30

you were incapable of applying.

You have parted with your tools.

Another argument: the monasteries favoured superstition.

But superstition can be made use of, and mitigated.

It is a thing of degrees and may, in some measure, be tolerated.

The essentials of religion.

Wise men are  
not partisans.

Wars are  
waged by rival  
follies.

But in the  
fight between  
superstition and  
hatred a wise man  
will choose what  
builds, endows, en-  
courages and dis-  
ciplines, rather  
than the opposite.

The monks'  
superstition is  
better than that  
of the philosophers.

On the mere  
transfer.

The surplus  
produce of the  
soil is this income  
of the landowner.

auxiliary. Wise men, who as such are not *admirers* (not admirers at least of the *Munera Terræ*), are not violently attached to these things, nor do they violently hate them. Wisdom is not the most severe corrector of folly. They are the rival follies, which mutually wage so unrelenting a war; and which make so cruel a use of their advantages, as they can happen to engage the immoderate vulgar, on the one side or the other, in their quarrels. Prudence would be neuter; but if, in the contention between fond attachment and fierce antipathy concerning things in their nature not made to produce such heats, a prudent man were obliged to make a choice of what errors and excesses of enthusiasm he would condemn or bear, perhaps he would think the superstition which builds, to be more tolerable than that which demolishes—that which adorns a country, than that which deforms it—that which endows, than that which plunders—that which disposes to mistaken beneficence, than that which stimulates to real injustice—that which leads a man to refuse to himself lawful pleasures, than that which snatches from others the scanty subsistence of their self-denial. Such, I think, is very nearly the state of the question between the ancient founders of monkish superstition, and the superstition of the pretended philosophers of the hour.

258. For the present I postpone all consideration of the supposed public profit of the sale, which, however, I conceive to be perfectly delusive. I shall here only consider it as a transfer of property. On the policy of that transfer I shall trouble you with a few thoughts.

259. In every prosperous community something more is produced than goes to the immediate support of the producer. This surplus forms the income of the landed capitalist. It will

be spent by a proprietor who does not labour. But this idleness is itself the spring of labour ; this repose the spur to industry. The only concern of the state is, that the capital taken in rent from the land should be returned again to the industry from whence it came; and that its expenditure should be with the least possible detriment to the morals of those who expend it, and to those of the people to whom it is returned.

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His expenditure of it is a spur to industry; only it should return to the same industry.

260. In all the views of receipt, expenditure, and personal employment, a sober legislator would carefully compare the possessor whom he was recommended to expel, with the stranger who was proposed to fill his place. Before the inconveniences are incurred which *must* attend all violent revolutions in property through extensive confiscation, we ought to have some rational assurance that the purchasers of the confiscated property will be in a considerable degree more laborious, more virtuous, more sober, less disposed to extort an unreasonable proportion of the gains of the labourer, or to consume on themselves a larger share than is fit for the measure of an individual ; or that they should be qualified to dispense the surplus in a more steady and equal mode, so as to answer the purposes of a politic expenditure, than the old possessors, call those possessors bishops, or canons, or commendatory abbots, or monks, or what you please. "The monks are lazy." Be it so. Suppose them no otherwise employed than by singing in the choir. They are as usefully employed as those who neither sing nor say. As usefully even as those who sing upon the stage. They are as usefully employed as if they worked from dawn to dark in the innumerable servile, degrading, unseemly, unmanly, and often most unwholesome and pestiferous occupations, to which by the social economy so many wretches are inevitably doomed. If it

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Before transference a legislator should consider the possessor and the successor.

Will the purchaser be more industrious or upright or just;

or more capable of benefiting the country ?

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It is said the monks are lazy.

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Are they not as usefully employed as those that work in mines, or carry on unhealthy tasks?

I shall prefer to rescue the miserable toilers.

These employments maintain our luxuries;

they are not more important to the state than the expense of monks.

No such change should be made except when there is clear advantage.

Here it seems the opposite.

The church estates encourage

literature,

archaeology,

were not generally pernicious to disturb the natural course of things, and to impede, in any degree, the great wheel of circulation which is turned by the strangely-directed labour of these unhappy people, I should be infinitely more inclined forcibly to rescue them from their miserable industry, than violently to disturb the tranquil repose of monastic quietude. Humanity, and perhaps policy, might better

10 justify me in the one than in the other. It is a subject on which I have often reflected, and never reflected without feeling from it. I am sure that no consideration, except the necessity of submitting to the yoke of luxury, and the despotism of fancy, who in their own imperious way will distribute the surplus product of the soil, can justify the toleration of such trades and employments in a well-regulated state. But for this purpose of distribution, it seems to  
20 me that the idle expenses of monks are quite as well directed as the idle expenses of us lay-loiterers.

261. When the advantages of the possession and of the project are on a par, there is no motive for a change. But in the present case, perhaps, they are not upon a par, and the difference is in favour of the possession. It does not appear to me that the expenses of those whom you are going to expel, do  
30 in fact take a course so directly and so generally leading to vitiate and degrade and render miserable those through whom they pass, as the expenses of those favourites whom you are intruding into their houses. Why should the expenditure of a great landed property, which is a dispersion of the surplus product of the soil, appear intolerable to you or to me, when it takes its course through the accumulation of vast libraries, which are the history of the force and weakness of the human mind; through great collections of ancient

records, medals, and coins, which attest and explain laws and customs ; through paintings and statues, that, by imitating nature, seem to extend the limits of creation ; through grand monuments of the dead, which continue the regards and connections of life beyond the grave ; through collections of the specimens of nature, which become a representative assembly of all the classes and families of the world, that by disposition facilitate, and, by exciting curiosity, open the avenues to science ? If by great permanent establishments, all these objects of expense are better secured from the inconstant sport of personal caprice and personal extravagance, are they worse than if the same tastes prevailed in scattered individuals ? Does not the sweat of the mason and carpenter, who toil in order to partake the sweat of the peasant, flow as pleasantly and as salubriously, in the construction and repair of the majestic edifices of religion, as in the painted booths and sordid sties of vice and luxury ; as honourably and as profitably in repairing those sacred works, which grow hoary with innumerable years, as on the momentary receptacles of transient voluptuousness ; in opera-houses, and brothels, and gaming-houses, and club-houses, and obelisks in the Champ de Mars ? Is the surplus product of the olive and the vine worse employed in the frugal sustenance of persons, whom the fictions of a pious imagination raise to dignity by construing in the service of God, than in pampering the innumerable multitude of those who are degraded by being made useless domestics, subservient to the pride of man ? Are the decorations of temples an expenditure less worthy a wise man than ribbons, and laces, and national cockades, and petit maisons, and petit soupers, and all the innumerable fopperies and follies in which 40

fine arts,

monuments,

natural history.

Large establish-  
ments do so,  
better than pri-  
vate individuals.The labour of  
tradesmen is as  
profitable in them  
as in the buildings  
in Paris.Their suspen-  
ance and decora-  
tions are as profit-  
able as what is  
spent in luxury in  
the cities.

We tolerate the luxuries, respecting property. Shall we violate property to remove the more tolerable?

All this apart from reform.

But corporate bodies can be reformed; and are more easily directed towards national ends than private persons are.

As to estates held by individuals of the higher clergy why should it not be so?

They are held by eminent men;

opulence sports away the burthen of its superfluity?

262. We tolerate even these; not from love of them, but for fear of worse. We tolerate them, because property and liberty, to a degree, require that toleration. But why proscribe the other, and surely, in every point of view, the more laudable use of estates? Why, through the violation of all property,

10 through an outrage upon every principle of liberty, forcibly carry them from the better to the worse?

263. This comparison between the new individuals and the old corps is made upon a supposition that no reform could be made in the latter. But, in a question of reformation, I always consider corporate bodies, whether sole or consisting of many, to be much more susceptible of a public direction by the power 20 of the state, in the use of their property, and in the regulation of modes and habits of life in their members, than private citizens ever can be, or perhaps ought to be: and this seems to me a very material consideration for those who undertake anything which merits the name of a politic enterprise.—So far as to the estates of monasteries.

264. With regard to the estates possessed by bishops and canons, and commendatory abbots, I cannot find out for what reason some landed estates may not be held otherwise than by inheritance. Can any philosophic spoiler undertake to demonstrate the positive or the comparative evil of having a certain, and that too a large, portion of landed property, passing in succession through persons whose title to it is, always in theory, and often in fact, an eminent degree of piety, morals, and learning; a property which, by its destination, in their 40 turn, and on the score of merit, gives to the

noblest families renovation and support, to the lowest the means of dignity and elevation; a property, the tenure of which is the performance of some duty (whatever value you may choose to set upon that duty), and the character of whose proprietors demands, at least, an exterior decorum, and gravity of manners; who are to exercise a generous but temperate hospitality; part of whose income they are to consider as a trust for charity; and who, even when they fail in their trust, when they slide from their character, and degenerate into a mere common secular nobleman or gentleman, are in no respect worse than those who may succeed them in their forfeited possessions? Is it better that estates should be held by those who have no duty, than by those who have one?—by those whose character and destination point to virtues, than by those who have no rule and direction in the expenditure of their estates but their own will and appetite? Nor are these estates held altogether in the character or with the evils supposed inherent in mortmain. They pass from hand to hand with a more rapid circulation than any other. No excess is good; and therefore too great a proportion of landed property may be held officially for life: but it does not seem to me of material injury to any commonwealth, that there should exist some estates that have a chance of being acquired by other means than the previous acquisition of money.

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they renovate noble families, and elevate the humble. They require great service and grave manners;

and promote hospitality and charity.

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Surely this is as beneficial as inheritance.

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And they circulate without legal difficulties.

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That some estates should be thus obtainable is not injurious.

The *Reflections* resumé d:  
Third Part.

265. This letter is grown to a great length, though it is indeed short with regard to the infinite extent of the subject. Various avocations have from time to time called my mind from the subject. I was not sorry to give myself leisure to observe whether, in the proceedings

Opinions confirmed by events.

Original plan of the book.

Limitation of author's purpose.

I have criticised freely.

Those who pay no deference to established ideas must not object to full discussion.

The Assembly is devoid of authority.

of the National Assembly, I might not find reasons to change or to qualify some of my first sentiments. Everything has confirmed me more strongly in my first opinions. It was my original purpose to take a view of the principles of the National Assembly with regard to the great and fundamental establishments ; and to compare the whole of what you have substituted in the place of what you have

10 destroyed, with the several members of our British constitution. But this plan is of a greater extent than at first I computed, and I find that you have little desire to take the advantage of any examples. At present I must content myself with some remarks upon your establishments ; reserving for another time what I proposed to say concerning the spirit of our British monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, as practically they exist.

20 266. I have taken a view of what has been done by the governing power in France. I have certainly spoke of it with freedom. Those whose principle it is to despise the ancient, permanent sense of mankind, and to set up a scheme of society on new principles, must naturally expect that such of us who think better of the judgment of the human race than of theirs, should consider both them and their devices as men and schemes upon their trial. They must take it for granted that we attend much to their reason, but not at all to their authority. They have not one of the great influencing prejudices of mankind in their favour. They avow their hostility to opinion. Of course they must expect no support from that influence, which, with every other authority, they have deposed from the seat of its jurisdiction.

267. I can never consider this Assembly  
40 as anything else than a voluntary association

of men, who have availed themselves of circumstances to seize upon the power of the state. They have not the sanction and authority of the character under which they first met. They have assumed another of a very different nature; and have completely altered and inverted all the relations in which they originally stood. They do not hold the authority they exercise under any constitutional law of the state. They have departed from the instructions of the people by whom they were sent; which instructions, as the Assembly did not act in virtue of any ancient usage or settled law, were the sole source of their authority. The most considerable of their acts have not been done by great majorities; and in this sort of near divisions, which carry only the constructive authority of the whole, strangers will consider reasons as well as resolutions.

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It has acted neither by law,  
nor by instruc-  
tions,

nor according  
to usage.

We therefore  
look to argu-  
ments.

268. If they had set up this new, experimental government as a necessary substitute for an expelled tyranny, mankind would anticipate the time of prescription, which, through long usage, mellows into legality governments that were violent in their commencement. All those who have affections which lead them to the conservation of civil order would recognise, even in its cradle, the child as legitimate, which has been produced from those principles of cogent expediency to 30 which all just governments owe their birth, and on which they justify their continuance. But they will be late and reluctant in giving any sort of countenance to the operations of a power which has derived its birth from no law and no necessity, but which on the contrary has had its origin in those vices and sinister practices by which the social union is often disturbed and sometimes destroyed. This Assembly has hardly a year's prescription. 40 We have their own word for it that they have

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There was no  
justifying neces-  
sity.

The power is  
of dubious origin.

A revolution requires examination and defence.

In regard to the public good they speculate, and trust to chance.

In the keeping of power they follow the beaten track of artifice;

earnest only in selfishness.

made a revolution. To make a revolution is a measure which, *prima fronte*, requires an apology. To make a revolution is to subvert the ancient state of our country; and no common reasons are called for to justify so violent a proceeding. The sense of mankind authorises us to examine into the mode of acquiring new power, and to criticise on the use that is made of it, with less awe and reverence than that which is usually conceded to a settled and recognised authority.

269. In obtaining and securing their power, the Assembly proceeds upon principles the most opposite from those which appear to direct them in the use of it. An observation on this difference will let us into the true spirit of their conduct. Everything which they have done, or continue to do, in order to obtain and keep their power, is by the most common arts. 20 They proceed exactly as their ancestors of ambition have done before them.—Trace them through all their artifices, frauds, and violences, you can find nothing at all that is new. They follow precedents and examples with the punctilious exactness of a pleader. They never depart an iota from the authentic formulas of tyranny and usurpation. But in all the regulations relative to the public good, the spirit has been the very reverse of this. There 30 they commit the whole to the mercy of untried speculations; they abandon the dearest interests of the public to those loose theories, to which none of them would choose to trust the slightest of his private concerns. They make this difference, because in their desire of obtaining and securing power they are thoroughly in earnest; there they travel in the beaten road. The public interests, because about them they have no real solicitude, they 40 abandon wholly to chance; I say to chance,

because their schemes have nothing in experience to prove their tendency beneficial.

270. We must always see with a pity not unmixed with respect the errors of those who are timid and doubtful of themselves with regard to points wherein the happiness of mankind is concerned. But in these gentlemen there is nothing of the tender, parental solicitude which fears to cut up the infant for the sake of an experiment. In the vastness of their promises, and the confidence of their predictions, they far outdo all the boasting of empirics. The arrogance of their pretensions, in a manner provokes and challenges us to an inquiry into their foundation.

271. I am convinced that there are men of considerable parts among the popular leaders in the National Assembly. Some of them display eloquence in their speeches and their writings. This cannot be without powerful and cultivated talents. But eloquence may exist without a proportionable degree of wisdom. When I speak of ability, I am obliged to distinguish. What they have done towards the support of their system bespeaks no ordinary men. In the system itself, taken as the scheme of a republic constructed for procuring the prosperity and security of the citizen, and for promoting the strength and grandeur of the state, I confess myself unable to find out anything which displays, in a single instance, the work of a comprehensive and disposing mind, or even the provisions of a vulgar prudence. Their purpose everywhere seems to have been to evade and slip aside from *difficulty*. This it has been the glory of the great masters in all the arts to confront, and to overcome; and when they had overcome the first difficulty, to turn it into an instrument for new conquests over new difficulties; thus to enable them to extend the

They are not timid but confident and arrogant,

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thus challenging investigation.

The leaders are eloquent men;

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but political wisdom and comprehensiveness of policy are wanting.

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They evade difficulty,

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which is a means of instruction and strength and achievement.

It makes work thorough.

Evasion produces arbitrariness.

Sloth is at last faced by multiplied difficulties.

This has made them commence with destruction;

empire of their science; and even to push forward, beyond the reach of their original thoughts, the land marks of the human understanding itself. Difficulty is a severe instructor, set over us by the supreme ordinance of a parental Guardian and Legislator, who knows us better than we know ourselves, as he loves us better too. *Pater ipse colendi haud facilem esse viam voluit.* He that wrestles with us

- 10 strengthens our nerves, and sharpens our skill. Our antagonist is our helper. This amicable conflict with difficulty obliges us to an intimate acquaintance with our object, and compels us to consider it in all its relations. It will not suffer us to be superficial. It is the want of nerves of understanding for such a task, it is the degenerate fondness for tricking short-cuts, and little fallacious facilities, that has in so many parts of the world created governments with arbitrary powers. They have created the late arbitrary monarchy of France. They have created the arbitrary republic of Paris. With them defects in wisdom are to be supplied by the plenitude of force. They get nothing by it. Commencing their labours on a principle of sloth, they have the common fortune of slothful men. The difficulties which they rather had eluded than escaped, meet them again in their course ; they multiply and thicken on them ; they are involved, through a labyrinth of confused detail, in an industry without limit, and without direction ; and, in conclusion, the whole of their work becomes feeble, vicious, and insecure.

272. It is this inability to wrestle with difficulty which has obliged the arbitrary Assembly of France to commence their schemes of reform with abolition and total destruction.<sup>1</sup> But is it

<sup>1</sup> A leading member of the Assembly, M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, has expressed the principle of all their proceedings as clearly as possible. Nothing can be more simple :—"Tous les établissements en France couronnent

in destroying and pulling down that skill is displayed? Your mob can do this as well at least as your assemblies. The shallowest understanding, the rudest hand, is more than equal to that task. Rage and frenzy will pull down more in half an hour, than prudence, deliberation, and foresight can build up in a hundred years. The errors and defects of old establishments are visible and palpable. It calls for little ability to point them out; and where absolute power is given, it requires but a word wholly to abolish the vice and the establishment together. The same lazy but restless disposition which loves sloth and hates quiet, directs the politicians when they come to work for supplying the place of what they have destroyed. To make everything the reverse of what they have seen is quite as easy as to destroy. No difficulties occur in what has never been tried. Criticism is almost baffled in discovering the defects of what has not existed; and eager enthusiasm and cheating hope have all the wide field of imagination, in which they may expatiate with little or no opposition.

273. At once to preserve and to reform is quite another thing. When the useful parts of an old establishment are kept, and what is super-added is to be fitted to what is retained, a vigorous mind, steady, persevering attention, various powers of comparison and combination, and the resources of an understanding fruitful in expedients, are to be exercised; they are to be exercised in a continued conflict with

*le malheur du peuple: pour le rendre heureux il faut le renouveler; changer ses idées; changer ses loix; changer ses mœurs; . . . changer les hommes; changer les choses; changer les mots . . . tout d'truire; oui, tout d'truire; puisque tout est à recréer.*" This gentleman was chosen president in an assembly not sitting at the *Quinze-vingt*, or the *Petits Maisons*; and composed of persons giving themselves out to be rational beings; but neither his ideas, language, nor conduct differ in the smallest degree from the discourses, opinions, and actions of those within and without the Assembly, who direct the operations of the machine now at work in France.

an easy thing.

Old errors are manifest.

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When they come to build they follow imag in a-tion;

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which is also easy.

The right way is to preserve and reform.

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Qualities required.

No obstinacy  
and no levity.

The aid of  
time.

Caution more  
needed than in  
material matters.

Parisian  
ideas.

Burke's con-  
ception of the law-  
giver.

Social aspects:

Aids are re-  
quired.

the combined force of opposite vices, with the obstinacy that rejects all improvement, and the levity that is fatigued and disgusted with everything of which it is in possession. But you may object—"A process of this kind is slow. It is not fit for an assembly which glories in performing in a few months the work of ages. Such a mode of reforming, possibly, might take up many years." Without question it

10 might; and it ought. It is one of the excellencies of a method in which time is amongst the assistants, that its operation is slow, and in some cases almost imperceptible. If circumspection and caution are a part of wisdom, when we work only upon inanimate matter, surely they become a part of duty too, when the subject of our demolition and construction is not brick and timber, but sentient beings, by the sudden alteration of whose state, condi-

20 tion, and habits, multitudes may be rendered miserable. But it seems as if it were the prevalent opinion in Paris, that an unfeeling heart, and an undoubting confidence, are the sole qualifications for a perfect legislator. Far different are my ideas of that high office. The true lawgiver ought to have a heart full of sensibility. He ought to love and respect his kind, and to fear himself. It may be allowed to his temperament to catch his ultimate object

30 with an intuitive glance; but his movements towards it ought to be deliberate. Political arrangement, as it is a work for social ends, is to be only wrought by social means. There mind must conspire with mind. Time is required to produce that union of minds which alone can produce all the good we aim at. Our patience will achieve more than our force. If I might venture to appeal to what is so much out of fashion in Paris, I mean to experience, 40 I should tell you that in my course I have known, and, according to my measure, have

co-operated with great men; and I have never yet seen any plan which has not been mended by the observations of those who were much inferior in understanding to the person who took the lead in the business. By a slow but well-sustained progress, the effect of each step is watched; the good or ill success of the first gives light to us in the second; and so, from light to light, we are conducted with safety through the whole series. We see that the parts or the system do not clash. The evils latent in the most promising contrivances are provided for as they arise. One advantage is as little as possible sacrificed to another. We compensate, we reconcile, we balance. We are enabled to unite into a consistent whole the various anomalies and contending principles that are found in the minds and affairs of men. From hence arises, not an excellence in simplicity, but one far superior, an excellence in composition. Where the great interests of mankind are concerned through a long succession of generations, that succession ought to be admitted into some share in the councils which are so deeply to affect them. If justice requires this, the work itself requires the aid of more minds than one age can furnish. It is from this view of things that the best legislators have been often satisfied with the establishment of some sure, solid, and ruling principle in government; a power like that which some of the philosophers have called a plastic nature; and having fixed the principle, they have left it afterwards to its own operation.

274. To proceed in this manner, that is, to proceed with a presiding principle, and a prolific energy, is with me the criterion of profound wisdom. What your politicians think the marks of a bold, hardy genius, are only proofs of a deplorable want of ability. By

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Growth must be watched, for corrections and adjustments.

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A complex whole.

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The future is to be considered,

and scope for development left.

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A plastic power.

The double method of wisdom.

Your adventurers;

they avoid the common food.

They are taught by satirists, and see only vices.

A bad training.

They lose love of men and the delight in goodness.

Hence their activity is mischievous.

- their violent haste and their defiance of the process of nature, they are delivered over blindly to every projector and adventurer, to every alchemist and empiric. They despair of turning to account anything that is common. Diet is nothing in their system of remedy. The worst of it is, that this their despair of curing common distempers by regular methods, arises not only from defect of comprehension, 10 but, I fear, from some malignity of disposition. Your legislators seem to have taken their opinions of all professions, ranks, and offices, from the declamations and buffooneries of satirists ; who would themselves be astonished if they were held to the letter of their own descriptions. By listening only to these, your leaders regard all things only on the side of their vices and faults, and view those vices and faults under every colour of exaggeration. 20 It is undoubtedly true, though it may seem paradoxical; but in general, those who are habitually employed in finding and displaying faults are unqualified for the work of reformation : because their minds are not only unfurnished with patterns of the fair and good, but by habit they come to take no delight in the contemplation of those things. By hating vices too much, they come to love men too little. It is therefore not wonderful that they 30 should be indisposed and unable to serve them. From hence arises the complexional disposition of some of your guides to pull everything in pieces. At this malicious game they display the whole of their *quadrimanous* activity. As to the rest, the paradoxes of eloquent writers, brought forth purely as a sport of fancy, to try their talents, to rouse attention and excite surprise, are taken up by these gentlemen, not in the spirit of the original authors, 40 as means of cultivating their taste and improving their style. These paradoxes become with

them serious grounds of action, upon which they proceed in regulating the most important concerns of the state. Cicero ludicrously describes Cato as endeavouring to act, in the commonwealth, upon the school paradoxes which exercised the wits of the junior students in the Stoic philosophy. If this was true of Cato, these gentlemen copy after him in the manner of some persons who lived about his time—*pede nudo Catonem*. Mr. Hume told me that he had from Rousseau himself the secret of his principles of composition. That acute though eccentric observer had perceived that to strike and interest the public, the marvellous must be produced; that the marvellous of the heathen mythology had long since lost its effects; that giants, magicians, fairies, and heroes of romance which succeeded, had exhausted the portion of credulity which belonged to their age; but now nothing was left to the writer but that species of the marvellous which might still be produced, and with as great an effect as ever, though in another way; that is, the marvellous in life, in manners, in characters, and in extraordinary situations, giving rise to new and unlooked-for strokes in politics and morals. I believe that were Rousseau alive, and in one of his lucid intervals, he would be shocked at the practical frenzy of his scholars, who in their paradoxes are servile imitators, and even in their incredulity discover an implicit faith.

275. Men who undertake considerable things, even in a regular way, ought to give us ground to presume ability. But the physician of the state, who, not satisfied with the cure of distempers, undertakes to regenerate constitutions, ought to show uncommon powers. Some very unusual appearances of wisdom ought to display themselves on the face of the designs of those who appeal to no practice, and who copy after

They adopt paradoxes,

like school-boys.

10 The art of Rousseau;

20 his new way of arousing wonder.

Outdone by his imitators.

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For regeneration great ability is needed.

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Let us test their merit by examining what they have done in five great departments.

no model. Has any such been manifested? I shall take a view (it shall for the subject be a very short one) of what the Assembly has done, with regard, first, to the constitution of the legislature; in the next place, to that of the executive power; then to that of the judicature; afterwards to the model of the army; and conclude with the system of finance; to see whether we can discover in any part of their schemes the portentous ability which may justify these bold undertakers in the superiority which they assume over mankind.

First, the supreme and legislative body:

the spirit, drift, and fitness thereof:

and its self-consistency.

In old constitutions we judge from effects,

276. It is in the model of the sovereign and presiding part of this new republic, that we should expect their grand display. Here they were to prove their title to their proud demands. For the plan itself at large, and for the reasons on which it is grounded, I refer to the journals of the Assembly of the 20 29th of September, 1789, and to the subsequent proceedings which have made any alterations in the plan. So far as in a matter somewhat confused I can see light, the system remains substantially as it has been originally framed. My few remarks will be such as regard its spirit, its tendency, and its fitness for framing a popular commonwealth, which they profess theirs to be, suited to the ends for which any commonwealth, and particularly 30 such a commonwealth, is made. At the same time, I mean to consider its consistency with itself and its own principles.

277. Old establishments are tried by their effects. If the people are happy, united, wealthy, and powerful, we presume the rest. We conclude that to be good from whence good is derived. In old establishments various correctives have

been found for their aberrations from theory. Indeed they are the result of various necessities and expediences. They are not often constructed after any theory; theories are rather drawn from them. In them we often see the end best obtained, where the means seem not perfectly reconcilable to what we may fancy was the original scheme. The means taught by experience may be better suited to political ends than those contrived in the original project. They again react upon the primitive constitution, and sometimes improve the design itself, from which they seem to have departed. I think all this might be curiously exemplified in the British Constitution. At worst, the errors and deviations of every kind in reckoning are found and computed, and the ship proceeds in her course. This is the case of old establishments; but in a new and merely theoretic system, it is expected that every contrivance shall appear, on the face of it, to answer its ends; especially where the projectors are no way embarrassed with an endeavour to accommodate the new building to an old one, either in the walls or on the foundations.

278. The French builders, clearing away as mere rubbish whatever they found, and, like their ornamental gardeners, forming everything into an exact level, propose to rest the whole local and general legislature on three bases of 30 three different kinds—one geometrical, one arithmetical, and the third, financial; the first of which they call the *basis of territory*; the second, the *basis of population*; and the third, the *basis of contribution*. For the accomplishment of the first of these purposes, they divide the area of their country into eighty-three pieces, regularly square, of eighteen leagues by eighteen. These large divisions are called *Departments*. These they portion, proceeding 40

and form theories later,

and study means,  
and thus im-  
prove the ori-  
ginal design.

20 In a new theoretic sys-  
tem we expect apparent per-  
fection.

The Assembly  
and also local  
councils are to  
be elected on a  
triple basis.

The territorial  
division and sub-  
division; depart-  
ments, com-  
munes, cantons.

A geometrical method.

Old divisions are partly suitable, partly not.

Inconveniences will arise in the new exact arrangements.

Great inequalities consequent.

Districts greatly vary.

by square measurement, into 1,720 districts, called *Communes*. These again they subdivide, still proceeding by square measurement, into smaller districts called *Cantons*, making in all 6,400.

279. At first view this geometrical basis of theirs presents not much to admire or to blame. It calls for no great legislative talents. Nothing more than an accurate land surveyor, 10 with his chain, sight, and theodolite, is requisite for such a plan as this. In the old divisions of the country, various accidents at various times, and the ebb and flow of various properties and jurisdictions, settled their bounds. These bounds were not made upon any fixed system undoubtedly. They were subject to some inconveniences; but they were inconveniences for which use had found remedies, and habit had supplied accommodation and patience. In 20 this new pavement of square within square, and this organisation, and semi-organisation, made on the system of Empedocles and Buffon, and not upon any politic principle, it is impossible that innumerable local inconveniences, to which men are not habituated, must not arise. But these I pass over, because it requires an accurate knowledge of the country, which I do not possess, to specify them. •
280. When these state surveyors came to take 30 a view of their work of measurement, they soon found that in politics the most fallacious of all things was geometrical demonstration. They had then recourse to another basis (or rather buttress) to support the building, which tottered on that false foundation. It was evident that the goodness of the soil, the number of the people, their wealth, and the largeness of their contribution, made such infinite variations between square and square, as to render 40 mensuration a ridiculous standard of power

in the commonwealth, and equality in geometry the most unequal of all measures in the distribution of men. However, they could not give it up. But dividing their political and civil representation into three parts, they allotted one of those parts to the square measurement, without a single fact or calculation to ascertain whether this territorial proportion of representation was fairly assigned, and ought upon any principle really to be a third. Having, however, given to geometry this portion (of a third for her dower) out of compliment, I suppose, to that sublime science, they left the other two to be scuffled for between the other parts, population and contribution.

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Hence the resolve to elect on this basis only one-third.

281. When they came to provide for population, they were not able to proceed quite so smoothly as they had done in the field of their geometry. Here their arithmetic came to bear upon their juridical metaphysics. Had they stuck to their metaphysic principles, the arithmetical process would be simple indeed. Men, with them, are strictly equal, and are entitled to equal rights in their own government. Each head, on this system, would have its vote, and every man would vote directly for the person who was to represent him in the legislature. "But soft—by regular degrees, not yet." This metaphysic principle, to which law, custom, usage, policy, reason, were to yield, is to yield itself to their pleasure. There must be many degrees, and some stages, before the representative can come in contact with his constituent. Indeed, as we shall soon see, these two persons are to have no sort of communion with each other. First, the voters in the *Canton*, who compose what they call *primary assemblies*, are to have a *qualification*. What! a qualification on the indefeasible rights of men? Yes; but it shall be a very small qualification. Our injustice shall be very little oppressive; only the local

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Method as to population,

arithmetical,

30

indirect, and

limited.

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The primary assemblies: or first stage,

a qualification ridiculed.

Natural equality abandoned.

Those elected rule in the commune.

Qualification of deputies.

Next stage: these deputies

- valuation of three days' labour paid to the public. Why, this is not much, I readily admit, for anything but the utter subversion of your equalising principle. As a qualification it might as well be let alone; for it answers no one purpose for which qualifications are established; and, on your ideas, it excludes from a vote the man of all others whose natural equality stands the most in need of protection and defence: I mean the man who has nothing else but his natural equality to guard him. You order him to buy the right, which you before told him nature had given to him gratuitously at his birth, and of which no authority on earth could lawfully deprive him. With regard to the person who cannot come up to your market, a tyrannous aristocracy, as against him, is established at the very outset, by you who pretend to be its sworn foe.
- 20      282. The gradation proceeds. These primary assemblies of the *Canton* elect deputies to the *Commune*; one for every two hundred qualified inhabitants. Here is the first medium put between the primary elector and the representative legislator; and here a new turnpike is fixed for taxing the rights of men with a second qualification: for none can be elected into the *Commune* who does not pay the amount of ten days' labour. Nor have we yet done.
- 30      There is still to be another gradation<sup>1</sup>. These *Communes*, chosen by the *Canton*, choose to the *Department*; and the deputies of the

<sup>1</sup> The Assembly, in executing the plan of their committee, made some alterations. They have struck out one stage in these gradations; this removes a part of the objection; but the main objection, namely, that in their scheme the first constituent voter has no connection with the representative legislator, remains in all its force. There are other alterations, some possibly for the better, some certainly for the worse; but to the author the merit or demerit of these smaller alterations appears to be of no moment, where the scheme itself is fundamentally vicious and absurd.

*Department* choose their deputies to the *National Assembly*. Here is a third barrier of a senseless qualification. Every deputy to the National Assembly must pay, in direct contribution, to the value of a *mark of silver*. Of all these qualifying barriers we must think alike ; that they are impotent to secure independence ; strong only to destroy the rights of men.

283. In all this process, which in its fundamental elements affects to consider only *population* upon a principle of natural right, there is a manifest attention to *property*; which, however just and reasonable on other schemes, is on theirs perfectly unsupportable.

284. When they come to their third basis, that of *Contribution*, we find that they have more completely lost sight of their rights of men. This last basis rests *entirely* on property.

A principal totally different from the equality of men, and utterly irreconcilable to it, is thereby admitted ; but no sooner is this principle admitted, than (as usual) it is subverted ; and it is not subverted (as we shall presently see) to approximate the inequality of riches to the level of nature. The additional share in the third portion of representation (a portion reserved exclusively for the higher contribution) is made to regard the *district* only, and the individuals in it who pay. It is easy

to perceive, by the course of their reasonings, how much they were embarrassed by their contradictory ideas of the rights of men and the privileges of riches. The committee of constitution do as good as admit that they are wholly irreconcilable. "The relation with regard to the contributions is without doubt *null* (say they) when the question is on the balance of the political rights as between individual and individual ; without which *personal*

elect for the Departments.

Third stage : these second deputies elect for the Assembly.

Qualification of Assembly candidates.

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The scheme inconsistent.

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Method as to contribution ; property now acknowledged ;

dependent on the wealth of the district;

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conflicting ideas,

the justification.

The proposed solution.

Some districts more fully represented than others;

inequality in respect of individuals.

Rights of wealth acknowledged;

*equality would be destroyed, and an aristocracy of the rich would be established. But this inconvenience entirely disappears when the proportional relation of the contribution is only considered in the great masses, and is solely between province and province ; it serves in that case only to form a just reciprocal proportion between the cities, without affecting the personal rights of the citizens."*

10      285. Here the principle of *contribution*, as taken between man and man, is reprobated as *null*, and destructive to equality : and as pernicious too ; because it leads to the establishment of an *aristocracy of the rich*. However, it must not be abandoned. And the way of getting rid of the difficulty is to establish the inequality as between department and department, leaving all the individuals in each department upon an exact par. Observe, that

20      this parity between individuals had been before destroyed, when the qualifications within the departments were settled; nor does it seem a matter of great importance whether the equality of men be injured by masses or individually. An individual is not of the same importance in a mass represented by a few, as in a mass represented by many. It would be too much to tell a man jealous of his equality, that the elector has the same franchise who votes for  
30      three members as he who votes for ten.

286. Now take it in the other point of view, and let us suppose their principle of representation according to contribution, that is, according to riches, to be well imagined, and to be a necessary basis for their republic. In this their third basis they assume that riches ought to be respected, and that justice and policy require that they should entitle men, in some mode or other, to a larger share in the  
40      administration of public affairs ; it is now to be

seen how the Assembly provides for the pre-eminence, or even for the security, of the rich, by conferring, in virtue of their opulence, that larger measure of power to their district which is denied to them personally. I readily admit (indeed I should lay it down as a fundamental principle) that in a republican government, which has a democratic basis, the rich do require an additional security above what is necessary to them in monarchies. They are subject to envy, and through envy to oppression. On the present scheme it is impossible to divine what advantage they derive from the aristocratical preference upon which the unequal representation of the masses is founded. The rich cannot feel it, either as a support to dignity, or as security to fortune: for the aristocratical mass is generated from purely democratic principles; and the prevalence given to it in the general representation has no sort of reference to, or connection with, the persons, upon account of whose property this superiority of the mass is established. If the contrivers of this scheme meant any sort of favour to the rich, in consequence of their contribution, they ought to have conferred the privilege either on the individual rich, or on some class formed of rich persons (as historians represent Servius Tullius to have done in the early constitution of Rome); because the contest between the rich and the poor is not a struggle between corporation and corporation, but a contest between men and men; a competition not between districts, but between descriptions. It would answer its purpose better if the scheme were inverted; that the votes of the masses were rendered equal; and that the votes within each mass were proportioned to property.

287. Let us suppose one man in a district (it is an easy supposition) to contribute as much as a hundred of his neighbours. Against

but no advantage accrues to the rich,

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as the voters still belong to the mass of the people,

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and the persons elected need not be of the rich.

Methods in England and old Rome.

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This method a mistake.

Illustration of the working:

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riches may only increase the number of its opponents elected.

Temptations of the system.

Relatively to other districts, no good end is served by this basis.

It yields no equipoise,

and no protection to the weaker,

- these he has but one vote. If there were but one representative for the mass, his poor neighbours would outvote him by a hundred to one for that single representative. Bad enough. But amends are to be made him. How? The district, in virtue of his wealth, is to choose, say ten members instead of one: that is to say, by paying a very large contribution he has the happiness of being outvoted, a hundred to one,
- 10 by the poor, for ten representatives, instead of being outvoted exactly in the same proportion for a single-member. In truth, instead of benefitting by this superior quantity of representation, the rich man is subjected to an additional hardship. The increase of representation within his province sets up nine persons more, and as many more than nine as there may be democratic candidates, to cabal and intrigue, and to flatter the people at his expense and to
- 20 his oppression. An interest is by this means held out to multitudes of the inferior sort, in obtaining a salary of eighteen livres a day (to them a vast object), besides the pleasure of a residence in Paris, and their share in the government of the kingdom. The more the objects of ambition are multiplied and become democratic, just in that proportion the rich are endangered.
288. Thus it must fare between the poor and the rich in the province deemed aristocratic, which in its internal relation is the very reverse of that character. In its external relation, that is, its relation to the other provinces, I cannot see how the unequal representation, which is given to masses on account of wealth, becomes the means of preserving the equipoise and the tranquillity of the commonwealth. For if it be one of the objects to secure the weak from being crushed by the strong (as in all society undoubtedly it is), how are the smaller and poorer of these masses to be saved from the
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tyranny of the more wealthy? Is it by adding to the wealthy further and more systematical means of oppressing them? When we come to a balance of representation between corporate bodies, provincial interests, emulations, and jealousies are full as likely to arise among them as among individuals; and their divisions are likely to produce a much hotter spirit of dissension, and something leading much more nearly to a war.

289. I see that these aristocratic masses are made upon what is called the principle of direct contribution. Nothing can be a more unequal standard than this. The indirect contribution, that which arises from duties on consumption, is in truth a better standard, and follows and discovers wealth more naturally than this of direct contribution. It is difficult indeed to fix a standard of local preference on account of the one, or of the other, or of both, because some provinces may pay the more of either or of both, on account of causes not intrinsic, but originating from those very districts over whom they have obtained a preference in consequence of their ostensible contribution. If the masses were independent, sovereign bodies, who were to provide for a federative treasury by distinct contingents, and that the revenue had not (as it has) many impositions running through the whole, which affect men individually, and not corporately, and which, by their nature, confound all territorial limits, something might be said for the basis of contribution as founded on masses. But of all things, this representation, to be measured by contribution, is the most difficult to settle upon principles of equity in a country which considers its districts as members of a whole. For a great city, such as Bourdeaux, or Paris, appears to pay a vast body of duties, almost out of all assignable

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and it en-  
courages dis-  
sension.

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The estimates  
are based only on  
direct contribu-  
tion;

which is u n -  
fair as it is not  
the best test o f  
wealth.

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Difficulties of  
the question;

relations o f  
provinces;

equity barely  
possible.

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Cities will be  
unduly favoured.

The case of  
indirect taxes;

but even the  
direct contribu-  
tion of a district  
is largely due to  
causes not local.

The arrange-  
ments not yet  
completed.

A suspicion.

The constitu-  
tion will vary  
with the sys-  
tem of taxation  
adopted,

and contro-  
versies will arise.

Inequalities in  
detail,

proportion to other places, and its mass is considered accordingly. But are these cities the true contributors in that proportion? No. The consumers of the commodities imported into Bourdeaux, who are scattered through all France, pay the import duties of Bourdeaux. The produce of the vintage in Guienne and Languedoc give to that city the means of its contribution growing out of an export commerce.

- 10 The landholders who spend their estates in Paris, and are thereby the creators of that city, contribute for Paris from the provinces out of which their revenues arise. Very nearly the same arguments will apply to the representative share given on account of *direct* contribution: because the direct contribution must be assessed on wealth real or presumed; and that local wealth will itself arise from causes not local, and which therefore in equity ought not to produce a local preference.

- 20 290. It is very remarkable that in this fundamental regulation, which settles the representation of the mass upon the direct contribution, they have not yet settled how that direct contribution shall be laid, and how apportioned. Perhaps there is some latent policy towards the continuance of the present Assembly in this strange procedure. However, until they do this, they can have no certain constitution. It 30 must depend at last upon the system of taxation, and must vary with every variation in that system. As they have contrived matters, their taxation does not so much depend on their constitution, as their constitution on their taxation. This must introduce great confusion among the masses; as the variable qualification for votes within the district must, if ever real contested elections take place, cause infinite internal controversies.

- 40 291. To compare together the three bases, not on their political reason, but on the ideas on

which the Assembly works, and to try its consistency with itself, we cannot avoid observing that the principle which the committee call the basis of *population* does not begin to operate from the same point with the two other principles called the bases of *territory* and of *contribution*, which are both of an aristocratic nature. The consequence is, that, where all three begin to operate together, there is the most absurd inequality produced by the operation of the former on the two latter principles. Every canton contains four square leagues and is estimated to contain, on the average, 4000 inhabitants, or 680 voters in the *primary assemblies*, which vary in numbers with the population of the canton, and send one *deputy* to the *commune* for every 200 voters. Nine cantons make a *commune*.

292. Now let us take a *canton* containing a *sea-port town of trade*, or a *great manufacturing town*. Let us suppose the population of this canton to be 12,700 inhabitants, or 2,193 voters, forming three *primary assemblies*, and sending ten *deputies* to the *commune*.

293. Oppose to this one *canton* two others of the remaining eight in the same *commune*. These we may suppose to have their fair population of 4000 inhabitants and 680 voters each, or 8000 inhabitants and 1,360 voters, both together. These will form only two *primary assemblies*, and send only six *deputies* to the *commune*.

294. When the assembly of the *commune* comes to vote on the basis of *territory*, which principle is first admitted to operate in that assembly; the single *canton*, which has half the territory of the other two, will have ten voices to six in the election of three *deputies* to the assembly of the department, chosen on the express ground of a representation of territory.

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Cantons and  
population.

Communes, on  
the territorial  
basis, may have  
more votes from  
a small area than  
from a large.

The above  
supposition ag-  
gravated.

Then as to  
contribution.

Inequalities of  
town and country;

an absurd re-  
sult.

Effects are  
thus negative or  
inverse.

295. This inequality, striking as it is, will be yet highly aggravated, if we suppose, as we fairly may, the *several* other cantons of the *commune* to fall proportionably short of the average population, as much as the *principal canton* exceeds it. Now as to *the basis of contribution*, which also is a principle admitted first to operate in the assembly of the *commune*. Let us again take *one* canton, such as is stated 10 above. If the whole of the direct contributions paid by a great trading or manufacturing town be divided equally among the inhabitants, each individual will be found to pay much more than an individual living in the country according to the same average. The whole paid by the inhabitants of the former will be more than the whole paid by the inhabitants of the latter—we may fairly assume one-third more. Then the 12,700 inhabitants, or 2,193 voters 20 of the canton, will pay as much as 19,050 inhabitants, or 3,289 voters of the *other cantons*, which are nearly the estimated proportion of inhabitants and voters of *five* other cantons. Now the 2,193 voters will, as I before said, send only *ten* deputies to the assembly; the 3,289 voters will send *sixteen*. Thus, for an *equal* share in the contribution of the whole *commune*, there will be a difference of *sixteen* voices to *ten* in voting for deputies to be chosen on the principle of representing the general contribution 30 of the whole *commune*.

296. By the same mode of computation we shall find 15,875 inhabitants, or 2,741 voters of the *other cantons*, who pay *one-sixth LESS* to the contribution of the whole *commune*, will have *three* voices *MORE* than the 12,700 inhabitants, or 2,193 voters of the *one* canton.

297. Such is the fantastical and unjust inequality between mass and mass, in this curious 40 repartition of the rights of representation

arising out of *territory* and *contribution*. The qualifications which these confer are in truth negative qualifications that give a right in an inverse proportion to the possession of them.

298. In this whole contrivance of the three bases, consider it in any light you please, I do not see a variety of objects reconciled in one consistent whole, but several contradictory principles reluctantly and irreconcilably brought and held together by your philosophers, like wild beasts shut up in a cage, to claw and bite each other to their mutual destruction.

299. I am afraid I have gone too far into their way of considering the formation of a constitution. They have much, but bad, metaphysics; much, but bad, geometry; much, but false, proportionate arithmetic; but if it were all as exact as metaphysics, geometry, and arithmetic ought to be, and if their schemes were perfectly consistent in all their parts, it would make only a more fair and sightly vision. It is remarkable that in a great arrangement of mankind, not one reference whatsoever is to be found to anything moral or anything politic; nothing that relates to the concerns, the actions, the passions, the interests of men. *Hominem non sapiunt.*

300. You see I only consider this constitution as electoral, and leading by steps to the National Assembly. I do not enter into the internal government of the departments, and their genealogy through the communes and cantons. These local governments are, in the original plan, to be as nearly as possible composed in the same manner and on the same principles with the elective assemblies. They are each of them bodies perfectly compact and rounded in themselves.

301. You cannot but perceive in this scheme that it has a direct and immediate

Not harmony, but contradiction, placed side by side.

10

Even if the inequalities were removed the scheme would be good only in appearance.

20

The human interest is lacking.

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So far the internal government of the local bodies is not considered.

Each is complete in itself.

The Departments will seek

40

independence; there will be little national unity.

The Assembly is but a congress of deputies from eighty-three states.

Such associated provinces have arisen from necessary circumstances.

Here the unity is deliberately broken.

The method is like that of a foreign conqueror.

Ancient landmarks are removed;

everything great laid low;

means of reunion destroyed.

- tendency to sever France into a variety of republics, and to render them totally independent of each other without any direct constitutional means of coherence, connection, or subordination, except what may be derived from their acquiescence in the determinations of the general congress of the ambassadors from each independent republic. Such in reality is the National Assembly, and such governments I 10 admit to exist in the world, though in forms infinitely more suitable to the local and habitual circumstances of their people. But such associations, rather than bodies politic, have generally been the effect of necessity, not choice; and I believe the present French power is the very first body of citizens who, having obtained full authority to do with their country what they pleased, have chosen to dissever it in this barbarous manner.
- 20 302. It is impossible not to observe that, in the spirit of this geometrical distribution and arithmetical arrangement, these pretended citizens treat France exactly like a country of conquest. Acting as conquerors, they have imitated the policy of the harshest of that harsh race. The policy of such barbarous victors, who contemn a subdued people, and insult their feelings, has ever been, as much as in them lay, to destroy all vestiges of the ancient country, in religion, in polity, in laws, and in manners; to confound all territorial limits; to produce a general poverty; to put up their properties to auction; to crush their princes, nobles, and pontiffs; to lay low everything which had lifted its head above the level, or which could serve to combine or rally, in their distresses, the disbanded people, under the standard of old opinion. They have made France free in the manner in which those 30 sincere friends to the rights of mankind, the Romans, freed Greece, Macedon, and other

nations. They destroyed the bonds of their union, under colour of providing for the independence of each of their cities.

303. When the members who compose these new bodies of cantons, communes, and departments, arrangements purposely produced through the medium of confusion, begin to act, they will find themselves in a great measure strangers to one another. The electors and elected throughout, especially in the rural *cantons*,<sup>10</sup> will be frequently without any civil habitudes or connections, or any of that natural discipline which is the soul of a true republic. Magistrates and collectors of revenue are now no longer acquainted with their districts, bishops with their dioceses, or curates with their parishes. These new colonies of the rights of men bear a strong resemblance to that sort of military colonies which Tacitus has observed upon in the declining policy of <sup>20</sup>Rome. In better and wiser days (whatever course they took with foreign nations) they were careful to make the elements of methodical subordination and settlement to be coeval; and even to lay the foundations of civil discipline in the military.<sup>1</sup> But, when all the good arts had fallen into ruin, they proceeded, as your Assembly does, upon the equality of men, and with as little judgment, and as little care for those things which make a republic tolerable or durable. But in this, as well as almost every instance, your new commonwealth is born, and bred, and fed, in those curruptions which mark degenerated and worn-out republics. Your child comes into the world with <sup>30</sup>

In the new provincial bodies bonds of association and common principle will not exist.

Men will not know their offices.

In the early days of Rome their colonies were founded with graded ranks; in later days of decline they consisted of soldiers equal in position.

Your constitution is similar,

<sup>1</sup> Non, ut olim, universæ legiones deducabantur cum tribunis, et centurionibus, et sui cujusque ordinis militibus, ut consensu et caritate rem publicam afficerent; sed ignoti inter se, diversis manipulis, sine rectore, sine affectibus mutuis, quasi ex alio genere mortalium, repente in unum collecti, numeros magis quam colonia.—Tac. *Anal.*, l. 14, sect. 27. All this will be still more applicable to the unconnected, rotatory, biennial national assemblies, in this absurd and senseless constitution.

it has the features of decay.

Ancient legislators studied human nature and social life.

They knew different types and classes.

Hence their classifications,

with suitable situations and privileges.

They would have been ashamed not to

the symptoms of death; the *facies Hippocratica* forms the character of its physiognomy, and the prognostic of its fate.

304. The legislators who framed the ancient republics knew that their business was too arduous to be accomplished with no better apparatus than the metaphysics of an undergraduate, and the mathematics and arithmetic of an exciseman. They had to do with men,

10 and they were obliged to study human nature. They had to do with citizens, and they were obliged to study the effects of those habits which are communicated by the circumstances of civil life. They were sensible that the operation of this second nature on the first produced a new combination; and thence arose many diversities amongst men, according to their birth, their education, their professions, the periods of their lives, their residence

20 in towns or in the country, their several ways of acquiring and of fixing property, and according to the quality of the property itself, all which rendered them as it were so many different species of animals. From hence they thought themselves obliged to dispose their citizens into such classes, and to place them in such situations in the state, as their peculiar habits might qualify them to fill, and to allot to them such appropriated privileges as might

30 secure to them what their specific occasions required, and which might furnish to each description such force as might protect it in the conflict caused by the diversity of interests that must exist, and must contend, in all complex society: for the legislator would have been ashamed that the coarse husbandman should well know how to assort and to use his sheep, horses, and oxen, and should have enough of common sense not to abstract and equalise 40 them all into animals, without providing for

each kind an appropriate food, care, and employment; whilst he, the economist, disposer, and shepherd of his own kindred, subliming himself into an airy metaphysician, was resolved to know nothing of his flocks but as men in general. It is for this reason that Montesquieu observed very justly that in their classification of the citizens, the great legislators of antiquity made the greatest display of their powers, and even soared above themselves. It is here that your modern legislators have gone deep into the negative series, and sunk even below their own nothing. As the first sort of legislators attended to the different kinds of citizens, and combined them into one commonwealth, the others, the metaphysical and alchemical legislators, have taken the direct contrary course. They have attempted to confound all sorts of citizens, as well as they could, into one homogeneous mass; and then they divided this their amalgama into a number of incoherent republics. They reduce men to loose counters, merely for the sake of simple telling, and not to figures whose power is to arise from their place in the table. The elements of their own metaphysics might have taught them better lessons. The troll of their categorical table might have informed them that there was something else in the intellectual world besides *substance* and *quantity*. They might learn from the catechism of metaphysics that there were eight heads more,<sup>1</sup> in every complex deliberation, which they have never thought of; though these, of all the ten, are the subjects on which the skill of man can operate anything at all.

305. So far from this able disposition of some of the old republican legislators, which follows with a solicitous accuracy the moral

know particular needs.

A testimony.

10

You confound all classes in one mass and then cut the whole in parts.

20

Men become mere counters.

30

Eight of the ten categories are forgotten, though they include all the conditions of life.

Even the inferior classifications of the old monarchy, which

<sup>1</sup> Qualitas, Relatio, Actio, Passio, Ubi, Quando, Situs, Habitus.

## REFLECTIONS ON

were some barrier against despotism, are now obliterated.

Securities of freedom are thus lessened.

Hence if monarchy return it may be as absolute tyranny.

They even plan such a condition that the present government cannot be overthrown without utter disorganisation.

They expect the next despots to be moderate.

conditions and propensities of men, they have levelled and crushed together all the orders which they found, even under the coarse unartificial arrangement of the monarchy, in which mode of government the classing of the citizens is not of so much importance as in a republic. It is true, however, that every such classification, if properly ordered, is good in all forms of government; and composes a strong barrier

10 against the excesses of despotism, as well as it is the necessary means of giving effect and permanence to a republic. For want of something of this kind, if the present project of a republic should fail, all securities to a moderated freedom fail along with it; all the indirect restraints which mitigate despotism are removed; insomuch that if monarchy should ever again obtain an entire ascendancy in France, under this or under any other dynasty, it will probably be, if not voluntarily tempered, at setting out, by the wise and virtuous counsels of the prince, the most completely arbitrary power that has ever appeared on earth. This is to play a most desperate game.

306. The confusion which attends on all such proceedings, they even declare to be one of their objects, and they hope to secure their constitution by a terror of a return of those evils which attended their making it. "By 30 this," say they, "its destruction will become difficult to authority, which cannot break it up without the entire disorganisation of the whole state." They presume that if this authority should ever come to the same degree of power that they have acquired, it would make a more moderate and chastised use of it, and would piously tremble entirely to disorganise the state in the savage manner that they have done. They expect, from the virtues of 40 returning despotism, the security which is to be enjoyed by the offspring of their popular vices.

307. I wish, Sir, that you and my readers would give an attentive perusal to the work of M. de Calonne on this subject. It is indeed not only an eloquent, but an able and instructive, performance. I confine myself to what he says relative to the constitution of the new state, and to the condition of the revenue. As to the disputes of this minister with his rivals, I do not wish to pronounce upon them. As little do I mean to hazard any opinion concerning his ways and means, financial or political, for taking his country out of its present disgraceful and deplorable, [situation of servitude, anarchy, bankruptcy, and beggary. I cannot speculate quite so sanguinely as he does: but he is a Frenchman, and has a closer duty relative to those objects, and better means of judging of them, than I can have. I wish that the formal avowal which he refers to, made by one of the principal leaders in the Assembly, concerning the tendency of their scheme to bring France not only from a monarchy to a republic, but from a republic to a mere confederacy, may be very particularly attended to. It adds new force to my observations: and indeed M. de Calonne's work supplies my deficiencies by many new and striking arguments on most of the subjects of this letter.<sup>1</sup>

308. It is this resolution, to break their country into separate republics, which has driven them into the greatest number of their difficulties and contradictions. If it were not for this, all the questions of exact equality, and these balances, never to be settled, of individual rights, population, and contribution, would be wholly useless. The representation, though derived from parts, would be a duty which equally regarded the whole. Each deputy to the Assembly would be the representative of

Calonne's book,

with financial and political proposals,

10

mentions a design to turn France into a mere confederacy.

20

This division into many republics is the chief source of your electoral troubles.

Otherwise each deputy would count himself a member for France.

<sup>1</sup> See *l'Etat de la France*, p. 363.

There would be a supreme central authority to which all are related.

So it is in England.

Your assembly is sovereign: but our Commons are nothing apart from the other parts of the constitution.

The central point is the king's government; which the Houses support or control.

This centre guards the interests of the whole kingdom: so do king and lords and commons.

Therefore equality of repre-

- France, and of all its descriptions, of the many and of the few, of the rich and of the poor, of the great districts and of the small. All these districts would themselves be subordinate to some standing authority, existing independently of them, an authority in which their representation, and everything that belongs to it, originated, and to which it was pointed. This standing, unalterable, fundamental government would make, and it is the only thing which could make, that territory truly and properly a whole. With us, when we elect popular representatives, we send them to a council, in which each man individually is a subject, and submitted to a government complete in all its ordinary functions. With you the elective Assembly is the sovereign, and the sole sovereign; all the members are therefore integral parts of this sole sovereignty.
- But with us it is totally different. With us the representative, separated from the other parts, can have no action and no existence. The government is the point of reference of the several members and districts of our representation. This is the centre of our unity. This government of reference is a trustee for the *whole*, and not for the parts. So is the other branch of our public council, I mean the House of Lords. With us the king and the lords are several and joint securities for the equality of each district, each province, each city. When did you hear in Great Britain of any province suffering from the inequality of its representation; what district from having no representation at all? Not only our monarchy and our peerage secure the equality on which our unity depends, but it is the spirit of the House of Commons itself. The very inequality of representation, which is so foolishly complained of, is perhaps the very thing which

prevents us from thinking or acting as members for districts. Cornwall elects as many members as all Scotland. But is Cornwall better taken care of than Scotland? Few trouble their heads about any of your bases, out of some giddy clubs. Most of those who wish for any change, upon any plausible grounds, desire it on different ideas.

309. Your new constitution is the very reverse of ours in its principle; and I am astonished how any persons could dream of holding out anything done in it, as an example for Great Britain. With you there is little, or rather no, connection between the last representative and the first constituent. The member who goes to the National Assembly is not chosen by the people, nor accountable to them. There are three elections before he is chosen: two sets of magistracy intervene between him and the primary assembly, so as to render him, as I have said, an ambassador of a state, and not the representative of the people within a state. By this the whole spirit of the election is changed; nor can any corrective which your constitution-mongers have devised, render him anything else than what he is. The very attempt to do it would inevitably introduce a confusion, if possible, more horrid than the present. There is no way to make a connection between the original constituent and the representative, but by the circuitous means which may lead the candidate to apply in the first instance to the primary electors, in order that by their authoritative instructions (and something more perhaps) these primary electors may force the two succeeding bodies of electors to make a choice agreeable to their wishes. But this would plainly subvert the whole scheme. It would be to plunge them back into that tumult and confusion of popular election which, by their interposed gradation of elections,

sentation is of no importance.

Another great difference. Your deputies are not representatives.

They are not in contact with large constituencies.

If one appeal to the original constituents he has to secure the support of the successive electoral bodies.

But you wish to prevent popular election;

reckoning the people unfit.

Hence your contradictory position.

An election should be a personal choice, involving mutual obligation.

Your first assemblies never know the final deputy; nor can they call him to account.

Again, after two years he becomes ineligible for other two years.

After gaining experience he is disqualified.

they mean to avoid, and at length to risk the whole fortune of the state with those who have the least knowledge of it, and the least interest in it. This is a perpetual dilemma, into which they are thrown by the vicious, weak, and contradictory principles they have chosen. Unless the people break up and level this gradation, it is plain that they do not at all substantially elect to the Assembly; indeed they elect as little in appearance as reality.

310. What is it we all seek for in an election? To answer its real purposes, you must first possess the means of knowing the fitness of your man; and then you must retain some hold upon him by personal obligation or dependence. For what end are these primary electors complimented, or rather mocked, with a choice? They can never know anything of the qualities of him that is to serve them, nor has he any obligation whatsoever to them. Of all the powers unfit to be delegated by those who have any real means of judging, that most peculiarly unfit is what relates to a *personal* choice. In case of abuse, that body of primary electors never can call the representative to an account for his conduct. He is too far removed from them in the chain of representation. If he acts improperly at the end of his two years' lease, it does not concern him for two years more. By the new French constitution the best and the wisest representatives go equally with the worst into this *Limbus Patrum*. Their bottoms are supposed foul, and they must go into dock to be refitted. Every man who has served in an assembly is ineligible for two years after. Just as these *magistrates*, begin to learn their trade, like chimney sweepers, they are disqualified for exercising it. Superficial, new, petulant acquisition, and interrupted, dronish, broken, ill recollection, is to be the destined character of all your future

governors. Your constitution has too much of jealousy to have much of sense in it. You consider the breach of trust in the representative so principally, that you do not at all regard the question of his fitness to execute it.

311. This purgatory interval is not unfavourable to a faithless representative, who may be as good a canvasser as he was a bad governor. In this time he may cabal himself into a superiority over the wisest and most virtuous. 10 As, in the end, all the members of this elective constitution are equally fugitive, and exist only for the election, they may be no longer the same persons who had chosen him, to whom he is to be responsible when he solicits for a renewal of his trust. To call all the secondary electors of the *Commune* to account is ridiculous, impracticable, and unjust; they may themselves have been deceived in their choice, as the third set of electors, those of the *Department*, 20 may be in theirs. In your elections responsibility cannot exist.

312. Finding no sort of principle of coherence with each other in the nature and constitution of the several new republics of France, I considered what cement the legislators had provided for them from any extraneous materials. Their confederations, their *spectacles*, their civic feasts, and their enthusiasm, I take no notice of; they are nothing but mere tricks; but tracing their policy through their actions, I think I can distinguish the arrangements by which they propose to hold these republics together. The first, is the *confiscation*, with the compulsory paper currency annexed to it; the second, is the supreme power of the city of Paris; the third, is the general army of the state. Of this last I shall reserve what I have to say until I come to consider the army as a head by itself.

Through distrust you fail to promote fitness.

The two years of exclusion may encourage intrigue.

Meanwhile the electors of the Department and commune may have changed.

Thus responsibility must be weak.

Is there any outside bond or cause of coherence and unity in the 83 republics?

30

There are perhaps three such bonds contemplated.

40

The first is the paper currency.  
It may for a time.

If the lands prove insufficient the troubles of the republics, internal and external, will increase.

If, on the other hand, the assignats should cease to be needed the bond ceases.

In any case this vast paper circulation must put all power into oligarchies of money dealers.

For it is revenue as well as currency.

Money is powerful in England

313. As to the operation of the first (the confiscation and paper currency) merely as a cement, I cannot deny that these, the one depending on the other, may for some time compose some sort of cement, if their madness and folly in the management, and in the tempering of the parts together, does not produce a repulsion in the very outset. But allowing to the scheme some coherence and some duration, it appears to me that if, after a while, the confiscation should not be found sufficient to support the paper coinage (as I am morally certain it will not), then, instead of cementing, it will add infinitely to the dissociation, distraction, and confusion of these confederate republics, both with relation to each other, and to the several parts within themselves. But if the confiscation should so far succeed as to sink the paper currency, the cement is gone with the circulation.
- 20 In the meantime its binding force will be very uncertain, and it will straiten or relax with every variation in the credit of the paper.
314. One thing only is certain in this scheme, which is an effect seemingly collateral, but direct, I have no doubt, in the minds of those who conduct this business, that is, its effect in producing an *Oligarchy* in every one of the republics. A paper circulation, not founded on any real money deposited or engaged for, 30 amounting already to four-and-forty millions of English money, and this currency by force substituted in the place of the coin of the kingdom, becoming thereby the substance of its revenue, as well as the medium of all its commercial and civil intercourse, must put the whole of what power, authority, and influence is left, in any form whatsoever it may assume, into the hands of the managers and conductors of this circulation.
- 40 315. In England we feel the influence of the bank, though it is only the centre of a

voluntary dealing. He knows little indeed of the influence of money upon mankind, who does not see the force of the management of a moneyed concern, which is so much more extensive, and in its nature so much more depending on the managers, than any of ours. But this is not merely a money concern. There is another member in the system inseparably connected with this money management. It consists in the means of drawing out at discretion portions of the confiscated lands for sale; and carrying on a process of continual transmutation of paper into land, and land into paper. When we follow this process in its effects, we may conceive something of the intensity of the force with which this system must operate. By this means the spirit of money-jobbing and speculation goes into the mass of land itself, and incorporates with it. By this kind of operation, that species of property becomes (as it were) volatilised; it assumes an unnatural and monstrous activity, and thereby throws into the hands of the several managers, principal and subordinate, Parisian and provincial, all the representative of money, and perhaps a full tenth part of all the land in France, which has now acquired the worst and most pernicious part of the evil of a paper circulation, the greatest possible uncertainty in its value. They have reversed the Latonian kindness to the landed property of Delos. They have sent theirs to be blown about, like the light fragments of a wreck, *oras et littora circum.*

316. The new dealers, being all habitually adventurers, and without any fixed habits or local predilections, will purchase to job out again, as the market of paper, or of money, or of land, shall present an advantage. For though a holy bishop thinks that agriculture

though there are no compulsory notes. It must be much more so in France.

10 Moreover the lands are liable to constant transmutation.

Money-jobbing enters the land.

20 Its solidity or stability must cease.

It will be at the mercy of the money managers.

30 These church lands are now of most uncertain value.

The new purchasers of land will buy and sell as adventurers.

Usurers are not agriculturists; nor is atheism helpful.

10

Your monied and literary men together know less of land than some old peasants do.

20

However, they will soon tire of rural life :

30

they will praise it and leave it.

40

will derive great advantages from the “enlightened” usurers who are to purchase the church confiscations, I, who am not a good, but an old farmer, with great humility beg leave to tell his late lordship that usury is not a tutor of agriculture; and if the word “enlightened” be understood according to the new dictionary, as it always is in your new schools, I cannot conceive how a man’s not believing in God can teach him to cultivate the earth with the least of any additional skill or encouragement. “Diis immortalibus sero,” said an old Roman when he held one handle of the plough, whilst Death held the other. Though you were to join in the commission all the directors of the two academies to the directors of the *Caisse d’Escompte*, one old, experienced peasant is worth them all. I have got more information upon a curious and interesting branch of husbandry, in one short conversation with an old Carthusian monk, than I have derived from all the Bank directors that I have ever conversed with. However, there is no cause for apprehension from the meddling of money-dealers with rural economy. These gentlemen are too wise in their generation. At first, perhaps, their tender and susceptible imaginations may be captivated with the innocent and unprofitable delights of a pastoral life; but in a little time they will find that agriculture is a trade much more laborious, and much less lucrative, than that which they had left. After making its panegyric, they will turn their backs on it like their great precursor and prototype. They may, like him, begin by singing “*Beatus ille*”—but what will be the end?

*Hæc ubi locutus fænector Alphius,  
Jam jam futurus rusticus  
Omnem rededit idibus pecuniam,  
Quærit Kalendis ponere.*

They will cultivate the *Caisse d'Eglise*, under the sacred auspices of this prelate, with much more profit than its vine-yards and its corn-fields. They will employ their talents according to their habits and their interests. They will not follow the plough whilst they can direct treasuries and govern provinces.

And will return to banking and politics.

317. Your legislators, in everything new, are the very first who have founded a commonwealth upon gaming, and infused this 10 spirit into it as its vital breath. The great object in these politics is to metamorphose France from a great kingdom into one great play-table; to turn its inhabitants into a nation of gamesters; to make speculation as extensive as life; to mix it with all its concerns; and to divert the whole of the hopes and fears of the people from their usual channels into the impulses, passions, and superstitions of those who live on chances. They 20 loudly proclaim their opinion, that this their present system of a republic cannot possibly exist without this kind of gaming fund; and that the very thread of its life is spun out of the staple of these speculations. The old gaming in funds was mischievous enough undoubtedly; but it was so only to individuals. Even when it had its greatest extent, in the Mississippi and South Sea, it affected but few, comparatively; where it extends further, as in 30 lotteries, the spirit has but a single object. But where the law, which in most circumstances forbids, and in none countenances, gaming, is itself debauched, so as to reverse its nature and policy, and expressly to force the subject to this destructive table, by bringing the spirit and symbols of gaming into the minutest matters, and engaging everybody in it, and in everything, a more dreadful epidemic distemper of that kind is spread than 40 yet has appeared in the world. With you a

You put a gambling spirit into your constitution.

Everything is made to depend on chance.

Old gambling was of a limited kind.

You make the law reverse its nature and promote this vice.

Values will be constantly changing.

Hence industry and economy must cease.

In this policy the many will be deceived by the few.

What the peasant will experience.

Town and country will quarrel.

man can neither earn nor buy his dinner without a speculation. What he receives in the morning will not have the same value at night. What he is compelled to take as pay for an old debt will not be received as the same when he comes to pay a debt contracted by himself; nor will it be the same when by prompt payment he would avoid contracting any debt at all. Industry must wither away. Economy must be driven from your country. Careful provision will have no existence. Who will labour without knowing the amount of his pay? Who will study to increase what none can estimate? Who will accumulate, when he does not know the value of what he saves? If you abstract it from its uses in gaming, to accumulate your paper wealth, would be not the providence of a man, but the distempered instinct of a jackdaw.

20      318. The truly melancholy part of the policy of systematically making a nation of gamesters is this, that though all are forced to play, few can understand the game; and fewer still are in a condition to avail themselves of the knowledge. The many must be the dupes of the few who conduct the machine of this speculations. What effect it must have on the country people is visible. The townsman can calculate from day to day; not so the inhabitant of the country. When the peasant first brings his corn to market, the magistrate in the towns obliges him to take the assignat at par; when he goes to the shop with his money, he finds it seven per cent. the worse for crossing the way. This market he will not readily resort to again. The towns-people will be inflamed; they will force the country people to bring their corn. Resistance will begin, and the murders of Paris and St. Denis may be renewed through all France.

319. What signifies the empty compliment paid to the country, by giving it, perhaps, more than its share in the theory of your representation? Where have you placed the real power over moneyed and landed circulation? Where have you placed the means of raising and falling the value of every man's freehold? Those, whose operations can take from, or add ten per cent. to, the possessions of every man in France, must be the masters of every man in France. The whole of the power obtained by this revolution will settle in the towns among the burghers, and the moneyed directors who lead them. The landed gentleman, the yeoman, and the peasant, have, none of them, habits, or inclinations, or experience, which can lead them to any share in this the sole source of power and influence now left in France. The very nature of a country life, the very nature of landed property, in all the occupations and all the pleasures they afford, render combination and arrangement (the sole way of procuring and exerting influence) in a manner impossible amongst country people. Combine them by all the art you can, and all the industry, they are always dissolving into individuality. Anything in the nature of incorporation is almost impracticable amongst them. Hope, fear, alarm, jealousy, the ephemeral tale that does its business and dies in a day, all these things, which are the reins and spurs by which leaders check or urge the minds of followers, are not easily employed, or hardly at all, amongst scattered people. They assemble, they arm, they act, with the utmost difficulty, and at the greatest charge. Their efforts, if ever they can be commenced, cannot be sustained. They cannot proceed systematically. If the country gentlemen attempt an influence through the mere income of their property, what is it to that of those

The country has the empty compliment of over-representation:

but all power will belong to the towns.

Rural classes cannot combine.

They are not easily stirred, and what may be begun cannot be sustained.

Country gentlemen cannot hold their own against city magnates;

The advantages  
of the capital.

Others cannot  
combine against  
her:

a resolution to  
that effect.

But this indi-  
cates general  
weakness.

The destruction  
of old associations  
will destroy patri-  
otism.

The history of  
public affections.

- of that city over the other republics. Paris is compact; she has an enormous strength, wholly disproportioned to the force of any of the square republics; and this strength is collected and condensed within a narrow compass. Paris has a natural and easy connection of its parts, which will not be affected by any scheme of a geometrical constitution, nor does it much signify whether its proportion of representation be more or less, since it has the whole draft of fishes in its drag-net. The other divisions of the kingdom being hacked and torn to pieces, and separated from all their habitual means, and even principles of union, cannot, for some time at least, confederate against her. Nothing was to be left in all the subordinate members, but weakness, disconnection, and confusion. To confirm this part of the plan, the Assembly has lately come to a resolution that no two of their republics shall have the same commander-in-chief.
324. To a person who takes a view of the whole, the strength of Paris, thus formed, will appear a system of general weakness. It is boasted that the geometrical policy has been adopted, that all local ideas should be sunk, and that the people should no longer be Gascons, Picards, Bretons, Normans; but Frenchmen, with one country, one heart, and one Assembly. But instead of being all Frenchmen, the greater likelihood is that the inhabitants of that region will shortly have no country. No man ever was attached by a sense of pride, partiality, or real affection, to a description of square measurement. He never will glory in belonging to the Chequer No. 71, or to any other badge-ticket. We begin our public affections in our families. No cold relation is a zealous citizen. We pass on to our neighbourhoods, and our habitual provincial connections. These are inns and

resting-places. Such divisions of our country as have been formed by habit, and not by a sudden jerk of authority, were so many little images of the great country in which the heart found something which it could fill. The love to the whole is not extinguished by this subordinate partiality. Perhaps it is a sort of elemental training to those higher and more large regards, by which alone men come to be affected, as with their own concern, in the prosperity of a kingdom so extensive as that of France. In that general territory itself, as in the old name of provinces, the citizens are interested from old prejudices and unreasoned habits, and not on account of the geometric properties of its figure. The power and pre-eminence of Paris does certainly press down and hold these republics together as long as it lasts. But, for the reasons I have already given you, I think it cannot last very long.

325. Passing from the civil creating and the civil cementing principles of this constitution, to the National Assembly, which is to appear and act as sovereign, we see a body in its constitution with every possible power, and no possible external control. We see a body without fundamental laws, without established maxims, without respected rules of proceeding, which nothing can keep firm to any system whatsoever. Their idea of their powers is always taken at the utmost stretch of legislative competency, and their examples for common cases from the exceptions of the most urgent necessity. The future is to be in most respects like the present Assembly; but, by the mode of the new elections and the tendency of the new circulations, it will be purged of the small degree of internal control existing in a minority chosen originally from various interests, and preserving something of their spirit. If 40 possible, the next Assembly must be worse

Love of a part  
serves as a training  
to a true regard for the whole.

10

Prejudices and  
habits help.

20

The Assembly  
is a sovereign body,  
having unlimited  
power, without  
control,

without laws,  
rules, maxims;

30

everything done  
by extremes.

The present  
minority will dis-  
appear at next  
elections.

The next Assembly will have new and worse schemes.

A great and novel want. There is no Senate, no revising Assembly, or advising Council.

Advantages of such a council,

especially to republics.

Its intermediate position, checking hasty legislation.

The chief executive officer is a King with no independent power.

than the present. The present, by destroying and altering everything, will leave to their successors apparently nothing popular to do. They will be roused by emulation and example to enterprises the boldest and the most absurd. To suppose such an assembly sitting in perfect quietude is ridiculous.

326. Your all-sufficient legislators, in their hurry to do everything at once, have forgot one thing that seems essential, and which I believe never has been before, in the theory or the practice, omitted by any projector of a republic. They have forgot to constitute a *senate*, or something of that nature and character. Never, before this time, was heard of a body politic composed of one legislative and active assembly, and its executive officers, without such a council; without something to which foreign states might connect themselves; something to which, in the ordinary detail of government, the people could look up; something which might give a bias, and steadiness, and preserve something like consistency in the proceedings of state. Such a body kings generally have as a council. A monarchy may exist without it; but it seems to be in the very essence of a republican government. It holds a sort of middle place between the supreme power exercised by the people, or immediately delegated from them, and the mere executive. Of this there are no traces in your constitution; and, in providing nothing of this kind, your Solons and Numas have, as much as in anything else, discovered a sovereign incapacity.

327. Let us now turn our eyes to what they have done towards the formation of an executive power. For this they have chosen a degraded king. This their first executive officer is to

be a machine, without any sort of deliberative discretion in any one act of his function. At best he is but a channel to convey to the National Assembly such matter as it may import that body to know. If he had been made the exclusive channel, the power would not have been without its importance; though infinitely perilous to those who would choose to exercise it. But public intelligence and statement of facts may pass to the Assembly 10 with equal authenticity, through any other conveyance. As to the means, therefore, of giving a direction to measures by the statement of an authorised reporter, this office of intelligence is as nothing.

328. To consider the French scheme of an executive officer, in its two natural divisions of civil and political.—In the first it must be observed that, according to the new constitution, the higher parts of judicature, in either of its lines, are not in the king. The king of France is not the fountain of justice. The judges, neither the original nor the appellate, are of his nomination. He neither proposes the candidates, nor has a negative on the choice. He is not even the public prosecutor. He serves only as a notary to authenticate the choice made of the judges in the several districts. By his officers he is to execute their sentence. When 20 we look into the true nature of his authority, he appears to be nothing more than a chief of bumbailiffs, serjeants at mace, catchpoles, jailers, and hangmen. It is impossible to place anything called royalty in a more degrading point of view. A thousand times better had it been for the dignity of this unhappy prince, that he had nothing at all to do with the administration of justice, deprived as he is of all that is venerable, and all that is consolatory, in that function, without power of 30

He is to be a channel of information; but not exclusive, therefore not a director of policy.

On the civil side:  
not the head of  
the Judicature,

nor public prosecu-  
tor.

Only a notary,  
and chief of bai-  
liffs.

The position  
ignoble.

Only unpleasant duties are assigned to him.

On the political side, he executes not laws but orders.

Even this trust should be made venerable.

The king cannot reward,

or rule except by fear.

- originating any process ; without a power of suspension, mitigation, or pardon. Everything in justice that is vile and odious is thrown upon him. It was not for nothing that the Assembly has been at such pains to remove the stigma from certain offices, when they are resolved to place the person who had lately been their king in a situation but one degree above the executioner, and in an office nearly 10 of the same quality. It is not in nature, that, situated as the king of the French now is, he can respect himself, or can be respected by others.
329. View this new executive officer on the side of his political capacity, as he acts under the orders of the National Assembly. To execute laws is a royal office; to execute orders is not to be a king. However, a political executive magistracy, though merely 20 such, is a great trust. It is a trust indeed that has much depending upon its faithful and diligent performance, both in the person presiding in it and in all its subordinates. Means of performing this duty ought to be given by regulation ; and dispositions towards it ought to be infused by the circumstances attendant on the trust. It ought to be environed with dignity, authority, and consideration, and it ought to lead to glory. The office of execution is an 30 office of exertion. It is not from impotence we are to expect the tasks of power. What sort of person is a king to command executory service, who has no means whatsoever to reward it? Not in a permanent office; not in a grant of land; no, not in a pension of fifty pounds a year; not in the vainest and most trivial title. In France the king is no more the fountain of honour than he is the fountain of justice. All rewards, all distinctions, are in other hands. Those who serve the king can be actuated by no natural

motive but fear; by a fear of everything except their master. His functions of internal coercion are as odious as those which he exercises in the department of justice. If relief is to be given to any municipality, the Assembly gives it. If troops are to be sent to reduce them to obedience to the Assembly, the king is to execute the order; and upon every occasion he is to be spattered over with the blood of his people. He has no negative; yet his name and authority is used to enforce every harsh decree. Nay, he must concur in the butchery of those who shall attempt to free him from his imprisonment, or show the slightest attachment to his person or to his ancient authority.

330. Executive magistracy ought to be constituted in such a manner, that those who compose it should be disposed to love and to venerate those whom they are bound to obey. A purposed neglect, or, what is worse, a literal but perverse and malignant obedience, must be the ruin of the wisest counsels. In vain will the law attempt to anticipate or to follow such studied neglects and fraudulent attentions. To make them act zealously is not in the competence of law. Kings, even such as are truly kings, may and ought to bear the freedom of subjects that are obnoxious to them. They may too, without derogating from themselves, bear even the authority of such persons, if it promotes their service. Louis the Thirteenth mortally hated the Cardinal de Richelieu; but his support of that minister against his rivals was the source of all the glory of his reign, and the solid foundation of his throne itself. Louis the Fourteenth, when come to the throne, did not love the Cardinal Mazarin; but for his interests he preserved him in power. When old, he detested Louvois; but for years, whilst he faithfully served his greatness, he endured his

He must keep  
order in the  
country.

10 All severity is  
in his name.

20 The supreme po-  
wer should be lov-  
ed and honoured.

Else there is no  
effective obedi-  
ence.

30 Kings who are  
sovereign may  
bear disagreeable  
ministers,

30 required by the  
public service;

who however act as their servants, in trust.

The Assembly's measures will not be cordially carried out by the king or his ministers,

who must despise the new leaders.

Harmony cannot exist.

Better to have set up a new head.

person. When George the Second took Mr. Pitt, who certainly was not agreeable to him, into his councils, he did nothing which could humble a wise sovereign. But these ministers, who were chosen by affairs, not by affections, acted in the name of, and in trust for, kings; and not as their avowed, constitutional, and ostensible masters. I think it impossible that any king, when he has recovered his first terrors, can cordially infuse vivacity and vigour into measures which he knows to be dictated by those who, he must be persuaded, are in the highest degree ill affected to his person. Will any ministers, who serve such a king (or whatever he may be called) with but a decent appearance of respect, cordially obey the orders of those whom but the other day in his name they had committed to the Bastile? Will they obey the orders of those whom, whilst they were exercising despotic justice upon them, they conceived they were treating with lenity; and from whom, in a prison, they thought they had provided an asylum? If you expect such obedience, amongst your other innovations and regenerations, you ought to make a revolution in nature, and provide a new constitution for the human mind. Otherwise, your supreme government cannot harmonise with its executorial system. There are cases in which we cannot take up with names and abstractions. You may call half a dozen leading individuals, whom we have reason to fear and hate, the nation. It makes no other difference, than to make us fear and hate them the more. If it had been thought justifiable and expedient to make such a revolution by such means, and through such persons, as you have made yours, it would have been more wise to have completed the business of the fifth and sixth of October. The new executive officer would then owe his situation to those who are his creators

as well as his masters ; and he might be bound in interest, in the society of crime, and (if in crimes there could be virtues) in gratitude, to serve those who had promoted him to a place of great lucre and great sensual indulgence ; and of something more : for more he must have received from those who certainly would not have limited an aggrandised creature, as they have done a submitting antagonist.

One newly exalted might serve gratefully.

331. A king circumstanced as the present, if he is totally stupefied by his misfortunes, so as to think it not the necessity, but the premium and privilege, of life to eat and sleep, without any regard to glory, can never be fit for the office. If he feels as men commonly feel, he must be sensible that an office so circumstanced is one in which he can obtain no fame or reputation. He has no generous interest that can excite him to action. At best, his conduct will be passive and defensive. To inferior people such an office might be matter of honour. But to be raised to it, and to descend to it, are different things, and suggest different sentiments. Does he *really* name the ministers ? They will have a sympathy with him. Are they forced upon him ? The whole business between them and the nominal king will be mutual counteraction. In all other countries, the office of ministers of state is of the highest dignity. In France it is full of peril, and incapable of glory. Rivals, however, they will have in their nothingness, whilst shallow ambition exists in the world, or the desire of a miserable salary is an incentive to short-sighted avarice. Those competitors of the ministers are enabled by your constitution to attack them in their vital parts, whilst they have not the means of repelling their charges in any other than the degrading character of culprits. The ministers of state in France are the only persons in that country who are incapable of a

10 A King who has been reduced cannot be fit.

There is nothing to inspire him.

20 He will have friction with his own ministers.

30

The ministers are without dignity.

40 They may be attacked in the Assembly, from which they are excluded.

They have responsibility :

which does not aid service.

A King cannot carry out a policy which is not his own.

It is said that the successor will be trained to the new station.

But history will teach him his wrongs.

The scheme is unnatural and cannot last.

share in the national councils. What ministers! What councils! What a nation!—But they are responsible. It is a poor service that is to be had from responsibility. The elevation of mind to be derived from fear will never make a nation glorious. Responsibility prevents crimes. It makes all attempts against the laws dangerous. But for a principle of active and zealous service, none but idiots could think of it. Is the conduct of a war to be trusted to a man who may abhor its principle; who, in every step he may take to render it successful, confirms the power of those by whom he is oppressed? Will foreign states seriously treat with him who has no prerogative of peace or war; no, not so much as in a single vote by himself or his ministers, or by any one whom he can possibly influence? A state of contempt is not a state for a prince: better get rid of him at once.

332. I know it will be said that these humours in the court and executive government will continue only through this generation; and that the king has been brought to declare the dauphin shall be educated in a conformity to his situation. If he is made to conform to his situation, he will have no education at all. His training must be worse even than that of an arbitrary monarch. If he reads —whether he reads or not, some good or evil genius will tell him his ancestors were kings. Thenceforward his object must be to assert himself, and to avenge his parents. This you will say is not his duty. That may be; but it is nature; and whilst you pique nature against you, you do unwisely to trust to duty. In this futile scheme of polity, the state nurses in its bosom, for the present, a source of weakness, perplexity, counteraction, inefficiency, and decay; and it prepares the means of its final ruin. In short, I see nothing in the executive force

(I cannot call it authority) that has even an appearance of vigour, or that has the smallest degree of just correspondence or symmetry, or amicable relation with the supreme power, either as it now exists, or as it is planned for the future government.

333. You have settled, by an economy as perverted as the policy, two<sup>1</sup> establishments of government; one real, one fictitious. Both maintained at a vast expense; but the IO fictitious at, I think, the greatest. Such a machine as the latter is not worth the grease of its wheels. The expense is exorbitant; and neither the show nor the use deserve the tenth part of the charge. Oh! but I don't do justice to the talents of the legislators: I don't allow, as I ought to do, for necessity. Their scheme of executive force was not their choice. This pageant must be kept. The people would not consent to part with it. 20 Right; I understand you. You do, in spite of your grand theories, to which you would have heaven and earth to bend, you do know how to conform yourselves to the nature and circumstances of things. But when you were obliged to conform thus far to circumstances, you ought to have carried your submission farther, and to have made, what you were obliged to take, a proper instrument, and useful to its end. That was in your power. 30 For instance, among many others, it was in your power to leave to your king the right of peace and war. What! to leave to the executive magistrate the most dangerous of all prerogatives? I know none more dangerous; nor any one more necessary to be so trusted. I do not say that this prerogative ought to be trusted to your king, unless he enjoyed other auxiliary trusts along with it, which he does not now hold. But if he did possess them, 40

Two expensive establishments.

The royal one is not worth the expense.

It is kept as a show,

the people requiring it.

But other powers should have been conferred on it; as the rights of war and treaties.

<sup>1</sup> In reality three, to reckon the provincial republican establishments.

Foreign rulers will now intrigue with members of Assembly,

and factions will arise.

If our system is not perfect you might have tried to improve on it, inventing new controls.

Your ministers meditate resignation.

They must see and feel the evils.

hazardous as they are undoubtedly, advantages would arise from such a constitution, more than compensating the risk. There is no other way of keeping the several potentates of Europe from intriguing distinctly and personally with the members of your Assembly, from intermeddling in all your concerns, and fomenting, in the heart of your country, the most pernicious of all factions ; factions

10 in the interest and under the direction of foreign powers. From that worst of evils, thank God, we are still free. Your skill, if you had any, would be well employed to find out indirect correctives and controls upon this perilous trust. If you did not like those which in England we have chosen, your leaders might have exerted their abilities in contriving better. If it were necessary to exemplify the consequences of such an executive government as  
20 yours, in the management of great affairs, I should refer you to the late reports of M. de Montmorin to the National Assembly, and all the other proceedings relative to the differences between Great Britain and Spain. It would be treating your understanding with disrespect to point them out to you.

334. I hear that the persons who are called ministers have signified an intention of resigning their places. I am rather astonished that  
30 they have not resigned long since. For the universe I would not have stood in the situation in which they have been for this last twelvemonth. They wished well, I take it for granted, to the Revolution. Let this fact be as it may, they could not, placed as they were upon an eminence, though an eminence of humiliation, but be the first to see collectively, and to feel each in his own department, the evils which have been produced by that revolution. In every step which they took, or forbore to take, they must have felt the degraded

situation of their country, and their utter incapacity of serving it. They are in a species of subordinate servitude, in which no men before them were ever seen. Without confidence from their sovereign, on whom they were forced, or from the Assembly who forced them upon him, all the noble functions of their office are executed by committees of the Assembly, without any regard whatsoever to their personal or their official authority. They are to execute, without power; they are to be responsible, without discretion; they are to deliberate, without choice. In their puzzled situation, under two sovereigns, over neither of whom they have any influence, they must act in such a manner as (in effect, whatever they may intend) sometimes to betray the one, sometimes the other, and always to betray themselves. Such has been their situation; such must be the situation of those who succeed them. I have much respect, and many good wishes, for M. Necker. I am obliged to him for attentions. I thought when his enemies had driven him from Versailles, that his exile was a subject of most serious congratulation—*sed multæ urbes et publica vota vicerunt*. He is now sitting on the ruins of the finances, and of the monarchy of France.

335. A great deal more might be observed on the strange constitution of the executory part of the new government; but fatigue must give bounds to the discussion of subjects which in themselves have hardly any limits.

336. As little genius and talent am I able to perceive in the plan of judicature formed by the National Assembly. According to their invariable course, the framers of your constitution have begun with the utter abolition of

They enjoy no confidence,

10

and have no power or freedom.

Their position under two masters is humiliating.

20

The case of Necker.

Collapse of his policy.

30

The plan of Judicature.

The Parlements needed adaptation not abolition.

They were independent:

a check on arbitrary measures,

and an aid to stability.

They made private property secure.

They to some extent balanced the supreme power.

Such judicial security is needed.

- the parliaments. These venerable bodies, like the rest of the old government, stood in need of reform, even though there should be no change made in the monarchy. They required several more alterations to adapt them to the system of a free constitution. But they had particulars in their constitution, and those not a few which deserved approbation from the wise. They possessed one fundamental excellence: they were independent. The most doubtful circumstance attendant on their office, that of its being vendible, contributed however to this independency of character. They held for life. Indeed they may be said to have held by inheritance. Appointed by the monarch, they were considered as nearly out of his power. The most determined exertions of that authority against them only showed their radical independence. They composed permanent bodies politic, constituted to resist arbitrary innovation; and from that corporate constitution, and from most of their forms, they were well calculated to afford both certainty and stability to the laws. They had been a safe asylum to secure these laws, in all the revolutions of humour and opinion. They had saved that sacred deposit of the country during the reigns of arbitrary princes and the struggles of arbitrary factions. They kept alive the memory and record of the constitution. They were the great security to private property; which might be said (when personal liberty had no existence) to be, in fact, as well guarded in France as in any other country. Whatever is supreme in a state ought to have, as much as possible, its judicial authority so constituted as not only not to depend upon it, but in some sort to balance it. It ought to give a security to its justice against its power. It ought to make its judicature, as it were, something exterior to the state.

337. These parliaments had furnished, not the best certainly, but some considerable corrective to the excesses and vices of the monarchy. Such an independent judicature was ten times more necessary when a democracy became the absolute power of the country. In that constitution, elective, temporary, local judges, such as you have contrived, exercising their dependent functions in a narrow society, must be the worst of all tribunals. In them it will be vain to look for any appearance of justice towards strangers, towards the obnoxious rich, towards the minority of routed parties, towards all those who in the election have supported unsuccessful candidates. It will be impossible to keep the new tribunals clear of the worst spirit of faction. All contrivances by ballot we know experimentally to be vain and childish to prevent a discovery of inclinations. Where they may be the best answer to the purposes of concealment, they answer to produce suspicion, and this is a still more mischievous cause of partiality.

338. If the parliaments had been preserved, instead of being dissolved at so ruinous a change to the nation, they might have served in this new commonwealth, perhaps not precisely the same (I do not mean an exact parallel), but nearly the same, purposes as the court and senate of Areopagus did in Athens; that is, as one of the balances and correctives to the evils of a light and unjust democracy. Every one knows that this tribunal was the great stay of that state; every one knows with what care it was upheld, and with what a religious awe it was consecrated. The parliaments were not wholly free from faction, I admit; but this evil was exterior and accidental, and not so much the vice of their constitution itself, as it must be in your new contrivance of sexennial elective judicatories. Several English

Still more needed in a democracy.

Your elective system is bad.

The unpopular will have no chance.

Faction will assert itself,

and partiality.

The parlements might have been correctives;

and a stay of the State.

There were some elements of faction; but less than you will now have.

Other charges  
have not been  
sustained.

The power of  
registering might  
have been kept.

Thus occasio-  
nal decrees, con-  
trary to jurispru-  
dence, might have  
been prevented.

You give the  
power of remon-  
strance to the  
king, who has to  
execute;

which is ab-  
surd.

You make your  
judges instru-  
ments;

commend the abolition of the old tribunals, as supposing that they determined everything by bribery and corruption. But they have stood the test of monarchic and republican scrutiny. The court was well disposed to prove corruption on those bodies when they were dissolved in 1771.—Those who have again dissolved them would have done the same if they could—but both inquisitions having failed,

10 I conclude that gross pecuniary corruption must have been rather rare amongst them.

339. It would have been prudent, along with the parliaments, to preserve their ancient power of registering, and of remonstrating at least, upon all the decrees of the National Assembly, as they did upon those which passed in the time of the monarchy. It would be a means of squaring the occasional decrees of a democracy to some principles of general jurisprudence. The vice of the ancient democracies, and one cause of their ruin, was, that they ruled, as you do, by occasional decrees, *psephismata*. This practice soon broke in upon the tenour and consistency of the laws; it abated the respect of the people towards them; and totally destroyed them in the end.

340. Your vesting the power of remonstrance, which, in the time of the monarchy, existed in the parliament of Paris, in your principal executive officer, whom, in spite of common sense, you persevere in calling king, is the height of absurdity. You ought never to suffer remonstrance from him who is to execute. This is to understand neither council nor execution; neither authority nor obedience. The person whom you call king ought not to have this power, or he ought to have more.

341. Your present arrangement is strictly judicial. Instead of imitating your monarchy, 40 and seating your judges on a bench of

independence, your object is to reduce them to the most blind obedience. As you have changed all things, you have invented new principles of order. You first appoint judges, who, I suppose, are to determine according to law, and then you let them know that, at some time or other, you intend to give them some law by which they are to determine. Any studies which they have made (if any they have made) are to be useless to them. But to supply these studies, they are to be sworn to obey all the rules, orders, and instructions which from time to time they are to receive from the National Assembly. These if they submit to, they leave no ground of law to the subject. They become complete and most dangerous instruments in the hands of the governing power, which, in the midst of a cause, or on the prospect of it, may wholly change the rule of decision. If these orders of the National Assembly come to be contrary to the will of the people, who locally choose those judges, such confusion must happen as is terrible to think of. For the judges owe their places to the local authority; and the commands they are sworn to obey come from those who have no share in their appointment. In the meantime they have the example of the court of *Chatelet* to encourage and guide them in the exercise of their functions. That court is to try criminals sent to it by the National Assembly, or brought before it by other courses of delation. They sit under a guard to save their own lives. They know not by what law they judge, nor under what authority they act, nor by what tenure they hold. It is thought that they are sometimes obliged to condemn at peril of their lives. This is not perhaps certain, nor can it be ascertained; but when they acquit, we know they have seen the persons whom they discharge, with perfect impunity to the actors, hanged at the door of their court.

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and you are  
to give them new  
laws,

and new in-  
structions,

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which they  
must swear to  
obey.

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Conflicts will  
arise between the  
Assembly and the  
local authority  
which appoints.

An illustration  
going on;

40

intimidation  
and violence.

The new laws are to be short:

much will therefore depend on the discretion of inexperienced men.

The administrative bodies are made irresponsible;

as if they were sovereign.

The reasons are political.

They are to answer to the Assembly, which is not a legal body.

342. The Assembly indeed promises that they will form a body of law, which shall be short, simple, clear, and so forth. That is, by their short laws, they will leave much to the discretion of the judge; whilst they have exploded the authority of all the learning which could make judicial discretion (a thing perilous at best) deserving the appellation of a *sound* discretion.

- 10      343. It is curious to observe that the administrative bodies are carefully exempted from the jurisdiction of these new tribunals. That is, those persons are exempted from the power of the laws, who ought to be the most entirely submitted to them. Those who execute public pecuniary trusts, ought of all men to be the most strictly held to their duty. One would have thought that it must have been among your earliest cares, if you did not mean
- 20      20 that those administrative bodies should be real, sovereign, independent states, to form an awful tribunal, like your late parliaments, or like our king's bench, where all corporate officers might obtain protection in the legal exercise of their functions, and would find coercion if they trespassed against their legal duty. But the cause of the exemption is plain. These administrative bodies are the great instruments of the present leaders in their progress through democracy to oligarchy. They must therefore be put above the law. It will be said that the legal tribunals which you have made are unfit to coerce them. They are undoubtedly. They are unfit for any rational purpose. It will be said too, that the administrative bodies will be accountable to the general assembly. This, I fear, is talking without much consideration of the nature of that assembly, or of these corporations.
- 30      40 However, to be subject to the pleasure of

that assembly is not to be subject to law either for protection or for constraint.

344. This establishment of judges as yet wants something to its completion. It is to be crowned by a new tribunal. This is to be a grand state judicature; and it is to judge of crimes committed against the nation—that is, against the power of the Assembly. It seems as if they had something in their view of the nature of the high court of justice erected in 10 England during the time of the great usurpation. As they have not yet finished this part of the scheme, it is impossible to form a right judgment upon it. However, if great care is not taken to form it in a spirit very different from that which has guided them in their proceedings relative to state offences, this tribunal, subservient to their inquisition, *the committee of research*, will extinguish the last sparks of liberty in France, and settle the most dreadful and arbitrary tyranny ever known in any nation. If they wish to give to this tribunal any appearance of liberty and justice, they must not evoke from or send to it the causes relative to their own members, at their pleasure. They must also remove the seat of that tribunal out of the republic of Paris.<sup>1</sup>

A supreme tribunal is to be created,

to try political cases.

It may become an instrument of tyranny.

Warnings.

345. Has more wisdom been displayed in the constitution of your army than what is discoverable in your plan of judicature? The 30 able arrangement of this part is the more difficult, and requires the greater skill and attention, not only as a great concern in itself, but as it is the third cementing principle in the new body of republics, which you call the French nation. Truly it is not easy to divine

The Army.

Its enhanced importance as a home force.

<sup>1</sup> For further elucidations upon the subject of all these judicatures, and of the committee of research, see M. de Calonne's work,

Questions of authority and discipline.

An awkward situation.

Official statement of the war minister,

throwing light on the new methods.

A story of disorder and disaffection.

what that army may become at last. You have voted a very large one, and on good appointments, at least fully equal to your apparent means of payment. But what is the principle of its discipline? or whom is it to obey? You have got the wolf by the ears, and I wish you joy of the happy position in which you have chosen to place yourselves, and in which you are well circumstanced for a free deliberation, relatively to that army, or to anything else.

346. The minister and secretary of state for the war department is M. de la Tour du Pin. This gentleman, like his colleagues in administration, is a most zealous assertor of the Revolution, and a sanguine admirer of the new constitution, which originated in that event. His statement of facts, relative to the military of France, is important, not only from his official and personal authority, but because it displays very clearly the actual condition of the army in France, and because it throws light on the principles upon which the Assembly proceeds, in the administration of this critical object. It may enable us to form some judgment, how far it may be expedient in this country to imitate the martial policy of France.

347. M. de la Tour du Pin, on the fourth of last June, comes to give an account of the state of his department, as it exists under the auspices of the National Assembly. No man knows it so well; no man can express it better. Addressing himself to the National Assembly, he says: "His Majesty has *this day* sent me to apprise you of the multiplied disorders of which *every day* he receives the most distressing intelligence. The army (*le corps militaire*) threatens to fall into the most turbulent anarchy. Entire regiments have dared to violate at once the respect due to the laws, to the king, to the order established by your decrees, and to the oaths which they have taken with the

most awful solemnity. Compelled by my duty to give you information of these excesses, my heart bleeds when I consider who they are that have committed them. Those against whom it is not in my power to withhold the most grievous complaints, are a part of that very soldiery which to this day have been so full of honour and loyalty, and with whom, for fifty years, I have lived the comrade and the friend.

348. "What incomprehensible spirit of delirium and delusion has all at once led them astray? Whilst you are indefatigable in establishing uniformity in the empire, and moulding the whole into one coherent and consistent body; whilst the French are taught by you at once the respect which the laws owe to the rights of man, and that which the citizens owe to the laws, the administration of the army presents nothing but disturbance and confusion. I see in more than one corps the bonds of discipline relaxed or broken; the most unheard-of pretensions avowed directly and without any disguise; the ordinances without force; the chiefs without authority; the military chest and the colours carried off; the authority of the king himself [*r̄isum teneatis*] proudly defied; the officers despised, degraded, threatened, driven away, and some of them prisoners in the midst of their corps, dragging on a precarious life in the bosom of disgust and humiliation. To fill up the measure of all these horrors, the commandants of places have had their throats cut, under the eyes, and almost in the arms, of their own soldiers.

349. "These evils are great; but they are not the worst consequences which may be produced by such military insurrections. Sooner or later they may menace the nation itself.  
- *The nature of things requires* that the army should never act but as *an instrument*. The moment that, erecting itself into a deliberative

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In the midst  
of political recon-  
struction there is

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wanton insub-  
ordination;

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defiance of king  
and commanders;

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and danger of

a military democracy.

Political committees and meetings,

unauthorised and improper.

This finished picture is not the whole.

Discipline is non-existent.

In this there is no cause of surprise,

body, it shall act according to its own resolutions, the *government, be it what it may, will immediately degenerate into a military democracy*; a species of political monster, which has always ended by devouring those who have produced it.

350. "After all this, who must not be alarmed at the irregular consultations, and turbulent committees, formed in some regiments by the common soldiers and non-commissioned officers, without the knowledge, or even in contempt of the authority, of their superiors; although the presence and concurrence of those superiors could give no authority to such monstrous democratic assemblies [comices]."

351. It is not necessary to add much to this finished picture: finished as far as its canvas admits; but as I apprehend, not taking in the whole of the nature and complexity of the disorders of this military democracy, which, the minister at war truly and wisely observes, wherever it exists, must be the true constitution of the state, by whatever formal appellation it may pass. For, though he informs the Assembly that the more considerable part of the army have not cast off their obedience, but are still attached to their duty, yet those travellers who have seen the corps whose conduct is the best, rather observe in them the absence of mutiny than the existence of discipline.

352. I cannot help pausing here for a moment to reflect upon the expressions of surprise which this minister has let fall, relative to the excesses he relates. To him the departure of the troops from their ancient principles of loyalty and honour seems quite inconceivable. Surely those to whom he addresses himself know the causes of it but too well. They know the doctrines which they have preached,

the decrees which they have passed, the practices which they have countenanced. The soldiers remember the 6th of October. They recollect the French guards. They have not forgotten the taking of the king's castles in Paris and Marseilles. That the governors in both places were murdered with impunity is a fact that has not passed out of their minds. They do not abandon the principles laid down so ostentatiously and laboriously of the equality of men. They cannot shut their eyes to the degradation of the whole noblesse of France, and the suppression of the very idea of a gentleman. The total abolition of titles and distinctions is not lost upon them. But M. de la Tour du Pin is astonished at their disloyalty, when the doctors of the Assembly have taught them at the same time the respect due to laws. It is easy to judge which of the two sorts of lessons men with arms in their hands are likely to learn. As to the authority of the king, we may collect from the minister himself (if any argument on that head were not quite superfluous) that it is not of more consideration with these troops than it is with everybody else. "The king," says he, "has over and over again repeated his orders to put a stop to these excesses: but, in so terrible a crisis, *your* [the Assembly's] concurrence is become indispensably necessary to prevent the evils which menace the state. *You* unite to the force of the legislative power, *that of opinion* still more important." To be sure, the army can have no opinion of the power or authority of the king. Perhaps the soldier has by this time learned that the Assembly itself does not enjoy a much greater degree of liberty than that royal figure.

353. It is now to be seen what has been proposed in this exigency, one of the greatest that can happen in a state. The minister requests

after unpunished outrages.

10 They see the abolition of the nobility, and hear the talk of equality.

20 Some lessons are easily learned.

30 They are not afraid of the King, and will not be of the Assembly.

40 The Minister's proposals:

declarations  
are required ;

no real punishment.

Useless oaths  
and decrees.

Vicious pamphlets.

An extraordi-  
nary method :

the Assembly to array itself in all its terrors, and to call forth all its majesty. He desires that the grave and severe principles announced by them may give vigour to the king's proclamation. After this we should have looked for courts civil and martial; breaking of some corps, decimating of others, and all the terrible means which necessity has employed in such cases to arrest the progress of the most terrible

10 of all evils; particularly, one might expect that a serious inquiry would be made into the murder of commandants in the view of their soldiers. Not one word of all this, or of anything like it. After they had been told that the soldiery trampled upon the decrees of the Assembly promulgated by the king, the Assembly pass new decrees; and they authorise the king to make new proclamations. After the secretary at war had stated that the regiments

20 had paid no regard to oaths *prêts avec la plus imposante solemnité*—they propose—what? More oaths. They renew decrees and proclamations as they experience their insufficiency, and they multiply oaths in proportion as they weaken, in the minds of men, the sanctions of religion. I hope that handy abridgments of the excellent sermons of Voltaire, d'Alembert, Diderot, and Helvetius, on the Immortality of the Soul, on a particular superintending Providence, and on a Future State of Rewards and Punishments, are sent down to the soldiers along with their civic oaths. Of this I

30 have no doubt; as I understand that a certain description of reading makes no inconsiderable part of their military exercises, and that they are full as well supplied with the ammunition of pamphlets as of cartridges.

40 354. To prevent the mischiefs arising from conspiracies, irregular consultations, seditious committees, and monstrous democratic assemblies [“comitia, comices”] of the

soldiers, and all the disorders arising from idleness, luxury, dissipation, and insubordination, I believe the most astonishing means have been used that ever occurred to men, even in all the inventions of this prolific age. It is no less than this :—The king has promulgated in circular-letters to<sup>1</sup> all the regiments his direct authority and encouragement, that the several corps should join themselves with the clubs and confederations in the several municipalities, and mix with them in their feasts and civic entertainments ! This jolly discipline, it seems, is to soften the ferocity of their minds ; to reconcile them to their bottle companions of other descriptions ; and to merge particular conspiracies in more general associations.<sup>1</sup> That this remedy would be pleasing to the soldiers, as they are described by M. de la Tour du Pin, I can readily believe ; and that, however mutinous otherwise, they will dutifully submit themselves to *these* royal proclamations. But I should question whether all this civic swearing, clubbing, and feasting would dispose them, more than at present they are disposed, to an obedience to their officers ; or teach them better to submit to the austere rules of military discipline. It will make them admirable citizens after the French mode, but not quite so good soldiers after any mode. A doubt might well arise whether the conversations at these good tables would fit them a great deal the better for the character of *mere instruments*, which this veteran officer and statesman justly observes the nature of things always requires an army to be.

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Soldiers invited to feast with civic bodies.

The objects in view.

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This will not improve military discipline,

30  
normake them mere instruments.

<sup>1</sup> Comme sa majesté y a reconnu, non une système d'associations particulières, mais une réunion de volontés de tous les François pour la liberté et la prospérité communes, ainsi pour le maintien de l'ordre publique ; il a pensé qu'il convenoit que chaque régiment prit part à ces fêtes civiques pour multiplier les rapports et reserrer les liens d'union entre les citoyens et les troupes.—Lest I should not be credited, I insert the words, authorising the troops to feast with the popular confederacies.

Another danger  
to the future,

in the arrog-  
ance and interfer-  
ence of Municipali-  
ties.

Their only right  
is requisition, but  
they assume au-  
thority.

Such the peo-  
ple; and such the  
army:

and so also the  
navy.

355. Concerning the likelihood of this improvement in discipline, by the free conversation of the soldiers with municipal festive societies, which is thus officially encouraged by royal authority and sanction, we may judge by the state of the municipalities themselves, furnished to us by the war minister in this very speech. He conceives good hopes of the success of his endeavours towards restoring order *for the present* from the good disposition of certain regiments ; but he finds something cloudy with regard to the future. As to preventing the return of confusion, "for this, the administration (says he) cannot be answerable to you, as long as they see the municipalities arrogate to themselves an authority over the troops, which your institutions have reserved wholly to the monarch. You have fixed the limits of the military authority and the municipal authority. You have bounded the action, which you have permitted to the latter over the former, to the right of requisition ; but never did the letter or the spirit of your decrees authorise the commons in these municipalities to break the officers, to try them, to give orders to the soldiers, to drive them from the posts committed to their guard, to stop them in their marches ordered by the king, or, in a word, to enslave the troops to the caprice of each of the cities, or even market towns, through which they are to pass."
356. Such is the character and disposition of the municipal society which is to reclaim the soldiery, to bring them back to the true principles of military subordination, and to render them machines in the hands of the supreme power of the country ! Such are the distempers of the French troops ! Such is their cure ! As the army is, so is the navy. The municipalities supersede the orders of the Assembly, and the seamen in their turn

supersede the orders of the municipalities. From my heart I pity the condition of a respectable servant of the public, like this war minister, obliged in his old age to pledge the Assembly in their civic cups, and to enter with a hoary head into all the fantastic vagaries of these juvenile politicians. Such schemes are not like propositions coming from a man of fifty years' wear and tear amongst mankind. They seem rather such as ought to be expected from those grand compounders in politics, who shorten the road to their degrees in the state; and have a certain inward fanatical assurance and illumination upon all subjects; upon the credit of which one of their doctors has thought fit, with great applause, and greater success, to caution the Assembly not to attend to old men, or to any persons who valued themselves upon their experience. I suppose all the ministers of state must qualify, and take this test; wholly abjuring the errors and heresies of experience and observation. Every man has his own relish. But I think if I could not attain to the wisdom, I would at least preserve something of the stiff and peremptory dignity of age. These gentlemen deal in regeneration: but at any price I should hardly yield my rigid fibres to be regenerated by them; nor begin, in my grand climacteric, to squall in their new accents, or to stammer, in my second cradle, the elemental sounds of their barbarous metaphysics.<sup>1</sup> *Si isti mihi largiantur ut repueriscam, et in eorum cunis vagiam, valde recusem!*

357. The imbecility of any part of the puerile and pedantic system which they call a constitution, cannot be laid open without discovering the utter insufficiency and mischief of every other part with which it comes in contact, or that bears any the remotest relation to it. You cannot propose a remedy for the incompetence of the crown, without displaying

The pitiable veteran War Minister associating with juvenile schemers,

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while Experience is repudiated.

Regeneration is to come from the metaphysics of fanatical fools.

The evils of one part reveal evils in all parts.

<sup>1</sup> This war minister has since quitted the school, and resigned his office.

The Municipali-  
ties.

The conflict  
within them.

Their claims.

Their varying  
relations with the  
army.

In the clubs  
the Soldiers will  
associate with the  
lowest.

Devices of re-  
medy will make  
matters worse.

the debility of the Assembly. You cannot deliberate on the confusion of the army of the state, without disclosing the worse disorders of the armed municipalities. The military lays open the civil, and the civil betrays the military anarchy. I wish everybody carefully to peruse the eloquent speech (such it is) of Mons. de la Tour du Pin. He attributes the salvation of the municipalities to the good behaviour of some of the

10 troops. These troops are to preserve the well-disposed part of those municipalities, which is confessed to be the weakest, from the pillage of the worst disposed, which is the strongest. But the municipalities affect a sovereignty, and will command those troops which are necessary for their protection. Indeed they must command them or court them. The municipalities, by the necessity of their situation, and by the republican powers they have obtained, 20 must, with relation to the military, be the masters, or the servants, or the confederates, or each successively; or they must make a jumble of all together, according to circumstances. What government is there to coerce the army but the municipality, or the municipality but the army? To preserve concord where authority is extinguished, at the hazard of all consequences, the Assembly attempts to cure the distempers by the distempers 30 themselves; and they hope to preserve themselves from a purely military democracy, by giving it a debauched interest in the municipal.

358. If the soldiers once come to mix for any time in the municipal clubs, cabals, and confederacies, an elective attraction will draw them to the lowest and most desperate part. With them will be their habits, affections, and sympathies. The military conspiracies, which are to be remedied by civic confederacies; 40 the rebellious municipalities, which are to be rendered obedient by furnishing them with the

means of seducing the very armies of the state that are to keep them in order; all these chimeras of a monstrous and portentous policy must aggravate the confusion from which they have arisen. There must be blood. The want of common judgment manifested in the construction of all their descriptions of forces, and in all their kinds of civil and judicial authorities, will make it flow. Disorders may be quieted in 10 one time and in one part. They will break out in others; because the evil is radical and intrinsic. All these schemes of mixing mutinous soldiers with seditious citizens must weaken still more and more the military connection of soldiers with their officers, as well as add military and mutinous audacity to turbulent artificers and peasants. To secure a real army, the officer should be first and last in the eye of the soldier; first and last in his attention, observance, and esteem. Officers it seems there are to be, whose chief qualification must be temper and patience. They are to manage their troops by electioneering arts. They must bear themselves as candidates, not as commanders. But as by such means power may be occasionally in their hands, the authority by which they are to be nominated becomes of high importance.

359. What you may do finally does not appear; nor is it of much moment, whilst the strange and contradictory relation between your army and all the parts of your republic, as well as the puzzled relation of those parts to each other and to the whole, remain as they are. You seem to have given the provisional nomination of the officers, in the first instance, to the king, with a reserve of approbation by the National Assembly. Men who have an interest to pursue are extremely sagacious in discovering the true seat of power. They must

There will be riots.

In the army officers should be supreme.

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With you they are to be patient and artful.

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Who are to nominate the officers

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If the Assembly is the final seat of power officers will intrigue there for promotion.

A double source of power will be injurious to the Assembly and to the officers.

Factions.

Some officers will be on one side, some on the other.

Seniority is an equally bad method.

The king will be a cypher where a firm authority is needed.

- soon perceive that those who can negative indefinitely, in reality appoint. The officers must therefore look to their intrigues in that Assembly, as the sole, certain road to promotion. Still, however, by your new constitution they must begin their solicitation at court. This double negotiation for military rank seems to me a contrivance as well adapted, as if it were studied for no other end, to
- 10 promote faction in the Assembly itself, relative to this vast military patronage ; and then to poison the corps of officers with factions of a nature still more dangerous to the safety of government, upon any bottom on which it can be placed, and destructive in the end to the efficiency of the army itself. Those officers who lose the promotions intended for them by the crown must become of a faction opposite to that of the Assembly which has rejected
- 20 their claims, and must nourish discontents in the heart of the army against the ruling powers. Those officers, on the other hand, who, by carrying their point through an interest in the Assembly, feel themselves to be at best only second in the good-will of the crown, though first in that of the Assembly, must slight an authority which would not advance and could not retard their promotion. If to avoid these evils you will have no other rule for command or promotion than seniority, you will have an army of formality ; at the same time it will become more independent, and more of a military republic. Not they, but the king is the machine. A king is not to be deposed by halves. If he is not everything in the command of an army, he is nothing. What is the effect of a power placed nominally at the head of the army, who to that army is no object of gratitude, or of fear? Such a cipher is not fit for
- 30 40 the administration of an object, of all things the most delicate, the supreme command of

military men. They must be constrained (and their inclinations lead them to what their necessities require) by a real, vigorous, effective, decided, personal authority. The authority of the Assembly itself suffers by passing through such a debilitating channel as they have chosen. The army will not long look to an assembly acting through the organ of false show and palpable imposition. They will not seriously yield obedience to a prisoner. They will either despise a pageant, or they will pity a captive king. This relation of your army to the crown will, if I am not greatly mistaken, become a serious dilemma in your politics.

360. It is besides to be considered whether an assembly like yours, even supposing that it was in possession of another sort of organ through which its orders were to pass, is fit for promoting the obedience and discipline of an army. It is known that armies have hitherto yielded a very precarious and uncertain obedience to any senate, or popular authority; and they will least of all yield it to an assembly which is only to have a continuance of two years. The officers must totally lose the characteristic disposition of military men, if they see with perfect submission and due admiration, the dominion of pleaders; especially when they find that they have a new court to pay to an endless succession of those pleaders; whose military policy, and the genius of whose command (if they should have any), must be as uncertain as their duration is transient. In the weakness of one kind of authority, and in the fluctuation of all, the officers of an army will remain for some time mutinous and full of faction, until some popular general, who understands the art of conciliating the soldiery, and who possesses the true spirit of command, shall draw the eyes of all men upon himself. Armies will obey him on his personal

The Assembly also will lose respect.

10 The relation of the king and army is a problem of the future.

20 It is doubtful if any such Assembly should have the control of an army.

30 Officers cannot respect attorneys.

40 After a time they will turn to some popular general,

who will then become master of all.

The Assembly are at present popular with the Army,

because they have weakened the authority of the officer,

which is the fundamental thing.

Soldiers will more and more influence the choice of officers,

not respecting the king.

And may claim to elect them.

account. There is no other way of securing military obedience in this state of things. But the moment in which that event shall happen, the person who really commands the army is your master ; the master (that is little) of your king, the master of your Assembly, the master of your whole republic.

361. How came the Assembly by their present power over the army? Chiefly, to be sure, by debauching the soldiers from their officers. They have begun by a most terrible operation. They have touched the central point, about which the particles that compose armies are at repose. They have destroyed the principle of obedience in the great, essential, critical link between the officer and the soldier, just where the chain of military subordination commences and on which the whole of that system depends. The soldier is told he is a citizen, and has the rights of man and citizen. The right of a man, he is told, is to be his own governor, and to be ruled only by those to whom he delegates that self-government. It is very natural he should think that he ought most of all to have his choice where he is to yield the greatest degree of obedience. He will therefore, in all probability, systematically do what he does at present occasionally ; that is, he will exercise at least a negative in the choice of his officers. At present the officers are known at best to be only permissive, and on their good behaviour. In fact, there have been many instances in which they have been cashiered by their corps. Here is a second negative on the choice of the king ; a negative as effectual at least as the other of the Assembly. The soldiers know already that it has been a question, not ill received in the National Assembly, whether they ought not to have the direct choice of their officers, or some proportion of them ? When such matters are in deliberation it is no extravagant supposition

that they will incline to the opinion most favourable to their pretensions. They will not bear to be deemed the army of an imprisoned king, whilst another army in the same country, with whom too they are to feast and confederate, is to be considered as the free army of a free constitution. They will cast their eyes on the other and more permanent army; I mean the municipal. That corps, they well know, does actually elect its own officers. They may 10 not be able to discern the grounds of distinction on which they are not to elect a Marquis de la Fayette (or what is his new name?) of their own. If this election of a commander-in-chief be a part of the rights of men, why not of theirs? They see elective justices of peace, elective judges, elective curates, elective bishops, elective municipalities, and elective commanders of the Parisian army.—Why should they alone be excluded? Are the brave troops of France the 20 only men in that nation who are not the fit judges of military merit, and of the qualifications necessary for a commander-in-chief? Are they paid by the state, and do they therefore lose the rights of men? They are a part of that nation themselves, and contribute to that pay. And is not the king, is not the National Assembly, and are not all who elect the National Assembly, likewise paid? Instead of seeing all these forfeit their rights by their receiving a salary, they perceive that in all these cases a salary is given for the exercise of those rights. All your resolutions, all your proceedings, all your debates, all the works of your doctors in religion and politics, have industriously been put into their hands; and you expect that they will apply to their own case just as much of your doctrines and examples as suits your pleasure.

362. Everything depends upon the army in such a government as yours; for you have 40 industriously destroyed all the opinions, and

They see the freedom of the National Guard,

and many elective appointments.

They will claim the rights granted to others; for,

they know the new theories.

The Army is the only power left.

Troops are constantly required for coercion,

of the people,

and of the colonists, and their slaves.

Executions.

These are consequences of your theories.

A case with farmers, followed by rules and commands.

prejudices, and, as far as in you lay, all the instincts which support government. Therefore the moment any difference arises between your National Assembly and any part of the nation, you must have recourse to force. Nothing else is left to you ; or rather you have left nothing else to yourselves. You see, by the report of your war minister, that the distribution of the army is in a great measure made 10 with a view of internal coercion.<sup>1</sup> You must rule by an army ; and you have infused into that army by which you rule, as well as into the whole body of the nation, principles which after a time must disable you in the use you resolve to make of it. The king is to call out troops to act against his people, when the world has been told, and the assertion is still ringing in our ears, that troops ought not to fire on citizens. The colonies assert to themselves an 20 independent constitution and a free trade. They must be constrained by troops. In what chapter of your code of the rights of men are they able to read that it is a part of the rights of men to have their commerce monopolised and restrained for the benefit of others ? As the colonists rise on you, the negroes rise on them. Troops again—Massacre, torture, hanging ! These are your rights of men ! These are the fruits of metaphysic declarations wantonly made, and shamefully retracted ! It was but the other day that the farmers of land in one of your provinces refused to pay some sorts of rent to the lord of the soil. In consequence of this, you decree that the country people shall pay all rents and dues, except those which as grievances you have abolished ; and if they refuse, then you order the king to march troops against them. You lay down metaphysic propositions which infer universal consequences, and then you attempt to limit logic by despotism. The leaders 30 40

<sup>1</sup> Courier François, 30th July, 1790. Assemblée Nationale, Numéro 210.

of the present system tell them of their rights, as men, to take fortresses, to murder guards, to seize on kings without the least appearance of authority even from the Assembly, whilst, as the sovereign legislative body, that Assembly was sitting in the name of the nation—and yet these leaders presume to order out the troops which have acted in these very disorders, to coerce those who shall judge on the principles, and follow the examples, which 10 have been guaranteed by their own approbation.

363. The leaders teach the people to abhor and reject all feudalism as the barbarism of tyranny, and they tell them afterwards how much of that barbarous tyranny they are to bear with patience. As they are prodigal of light with regard to grievances, so the people find them sparing in the extreme with regard to redress. They know that not only certain 20 quit-rents and personal duties, which you have permitted them to redeem (but have furnished no money for the redemption), are as nothing to those burthens for which you have made no provision at all. They know that almost the whole system of landed property in its origin is feudal; that it is the distribution of the possessions of the original proprietors, made by a barbarous conqueror to his barbarous instruments; and that the most grievous 30 effects of the conquest are the land rents of every kind, as without question they are.

364. The peasants, in all probability, are the descendants of these ancient proprietors, Romans or Gauls. But if they fail, in any degree, in the titles which they make on the principles of antiquaries and lawyers, they retreat into the citadel of the rights of men. There they find that men are equal; and the earth, the kind and equal mother of all, ought 40 not to be monopolised to foster the pride and

Inconsistency  
of the leaders, who  
encourage rebellion  
and then suppress disorder.

Contradictory  
attitudes.

Grievances ad-  
mitted, not re-  
dressed.

Worst burdens  
unrelieved.

The peasantry,  
when other ar-  
guments fail, fall  
back on the rights  
of men.

The soil belongs by nature not to landlords, but to tenants and labourers.

Agreements declared void.

Denial of prescriptive right.

The true succession belongs to the cultivator.

These inferences from your theories you repudiate; and you threaten,

luxury of any men, who by nature are no better than themselves, and who, if they do not labour for their bread, are worse. They find that by the laws of nature the occupant and subduer of the soil is the true proprietor; that there is no prescription against nature; and that the agreements (where any there are) which have been made with the landlords, during the time of slavery, are only the effect

- 10 of duresse and force; and that when the people re-entered into the rights of men, those agreements were made as void as everything else which had been settled under the prevalence of the old feudal and aristocratic tyranny. They will tell you that they see no difference between an idler with a hat and a national cockade, and an idler in a cowl or in a rochet. If you ground the title to rents on succession and prescription, they tell you from the speech of 20 M. Camus, published by the National Assembly for their information, that things ill begun cannot avail themselves of prescription; that the title of these lords was vicious in its origin; and that force is at least as bad as fraud. As to the title by succession, they will tell you that the succession of those who have cultivated the soil is the true pedigree of property, and not rotten parchments and silly substitutions; that the lords have enjoyed their usurpation too long, and that if they allow to these lay monks any charitable pension, they ought to be thankful to the bounty of the true proprietor, who is so generous towards a false claimant to his goods.

- 365. When the peasants give you back that coin of sophistic reason, on which you have set your image and superscription, you cry it down as base money, and tell them you will pay for the future with French 40 guards, and dragoons, and hussars. You hold up, to chastise them, the second-hand

authority of a king, who is only the instrument of destroying, without any power of protecting either the people or his own person. Through him it seems you will make yourselves obeyed. They answer, You have taught us that there are no gentlemen ; and which of your principles teach us to bow to kings whom we have not elected ? We know, without your teaching, that lands were given for the support of feudal dignities, feudal titles, and feudal offices. When 10 you took down the cause as a grievance, why should the more grievous effect remain ? As there are now no hereditary honours, and no distinguished families, why are we taxed to maintain what you tell us ought not to exist ? You have sent down our old aristocratic landlords in no other character, and with no other title, but that of exactors under your authority. Have you endeavoured to make these your rent-gatherers respectable to us ? No. You have sent them to us with their arms reversed, their shields broken, their impresses defaced; and so displumed, degraded, and metamorphosed, such unfeathered two-legged things, that we no longer know them. They are strangers to us. They do not even go by the names of our ancient lords. Physically they may be the same men ; though we are not quite sure of that, on your new philosophic doctrines of personal identity. In all other respects they are totally changed. We 30 do not see why we have not as good a right to refuse them their rents as you have to abrogate all their honours, titles, and distinctions. This we have never commissioned you to do; and it is one instance, among many indeed, of your assumption of undelegated power. We see the burghers of Paris, through their clubs, their mobs, and their national guards, directing you at their pleasure, and giving that as law to you which, under your authority, is transmitted 40 as law to us. Through you, these burghers

invoking the King.

Vigorous answers.

20 Right to refuse rent asserted.

All lordship rejected.

Intrusion of the Paris citizens

Why respect  
Parisians rather  
than peasants?

What of equality?

We have accepted your former teaching.

Horrid; but such is sophistry.

Why the Assembly insist on rents.

Free land would make the confiscation useless.

dispose of the lives and fortunes of us all. Why should not you attend as much to the desires of the laborious husbandman with regard to our rent, by which we are affected in the most serious manner, as you do to the demands of these insolent burghers, relative to distinctions and titles of honour, by which neither they nor we are affected at all? But we find you pay more regard to their fancies than to our necessities.

- 10 Is it among the rights of man to pay tribute to his equals? Before this measure of yours, we might have thought we were not perfectly equal. We might have entertained some old, habitual, unmeaning prepossession in favour of those landlords; but we cannot conceive with what other view than that of destroying all respect to them, you could have made the law that degrades them. You have forbidden us to treat them with any of the old formalities of respect, and now you send troops to sabre and to bayonet us into a submission to fear and force, which you did not suffer us to yield to the mild authority of opinion.

366. The ground of some of these arguments is horrid and ridiculous to all national ears; but to the politicians of metaphysics who have opened schools for sophistry, and made establishments for anarchy, it is solid and conclusive. It is obvious that on a mere consideration of the right, the leaders in the Assembly would not in the least have scrupled to abrogate the rents along with the titles and family ensigns. It would be only to follow up the principle of their reasonings, and to complete the analogy of their conduct. But they had newly possessed themselves of a great body of landed property by confiscation. They had this commodity at market; and the market would have been wholly destroyed if they 30 were to permit the husbandmen to riot in the speculations with which they so freely

intoxicated themselves. The only security which property enjoys in any one of its descriptions, is from the interests of their rapacity with regard to some other. They have left nothing but their own arbitrary pleasure to determine what property is to be protected and what subverted.

367. Neither have they left any principle by which any of their municipalities can be bound to obedience; or even conscientiously obliged not to separate from the whole to become independent, or to connect itself with some other state. The people of Lyons, it seems, have refused lately to pay taxes. Why should they not? What lawful authority is there left to exact them? The king imposed some of them. The old states, methodised by orders, settled the more ancient. They may say to the Assembly, Who are you, that are not our kings, nor the states we have elected, nor sit on the principles on which we have elected you? And who are we, that when we see the gabelles, which you have ordered to be paid, wholly shaken off, when we see the act of disobedience afterwards ratified by yourselves, who are we, that we are not to judge what taxes we ought or ought not to pay, and who are not to avail ourselves of the same powers, the validity of which you have approved in others? To this the answer is, We will send troops. The last reason of kings is always the first with your Assembly. This military aid may serve for a time, whilst the impression of the increase of pay remains, and the vanity of being umpires in all disputes is flattered. But this weapon will snap short, unfaithful to the hand that employs it. The Assembly keep a school, where, systematically, and with unremitting perseverance, they teach principles, and form regulations, destructive to all spirit of subordination, civil and military—and then they expect

Thanks to rapacity.

Arbitrary pleasure rules.

10 Municipalities are asserting independence. Thus Lyons is refusing to pay taxes.

20 Where is the authority?

30 Your only answer is violence.

At last the army will refuse to act.

40 Anarchy.

The armies of the Departments are better theoretically. The basis is citizenship or democracy.

But in relation to the State or to the regular army, or to the inter-relations of Municipalities, it is a monster.

It will lead to disaster.

The raising of Revenue.

that they shall hold in obedience an anarchic people by an anarchic army.

368. The municipal army which, according to their new policy, is to balance this national army, if considered in itself only, is of a constitution much more simple, and in every respect less exceptionable. It is a mere democratic body, unconnected with the crown or the kingdom ; armed, and trained, and officered at 10 the pleasure of the districts to which the corps severally belong ; and the personal service of the individuals, who compose, or the fine in lieu of personal service, are directed by the same authority.<sup>1</sup> Nothing is more uniform. If, however, considered in any relation to the crown, to the National Assembly, to the public tribunals, or to the other army, or considered in a view to any coherence or connection between its parts, it seems a monster, and can 20 hardly fail to terminate its perplexed movements in some great national calamity. It is a worse preservative of a general constitution than the systasis of Crete, or the confederation of Poland, or any other ill-devised corrective which has yet been imagined, in the necessities produced by an ill-constructed system of government.
369. Having concluded my few remarks on the constitution of the supreme power, the executive, the judicature, the military, and on the reciprocal relation of all these establishments, I shall say something of the ability showed by your legislators with regard to the revenue.

<sup>1</sup> I see by M. Necker's account, that the national guards of Paris have received, over and above the money levied within their own city, about £145,000 sterling out of the public treasure. Whether this be an actual payment for the nine months of their existence, or an estimate of their yearly charge, I do not clearly perceive. It is of no great importance, as certainly they may take whatever they please.

370. In their proceedings relative to this object, if possible, still fewer traces appear of political judgment or financial resource. When the states met, it seemed to be the great object to improve the system of revenue, to enlarge its collection, to cleanse it of oppression and vexation, and to establish it on the most solid footing. Great were the expectations entertained on that head throughout Europe. It was by this grand arrangement that France was to stand or fall ; and this became, in my opinion, very properly, the test by which the skill and patriotism of those who ruled in that Assembly would be tried. The revenue of the State is the State. In effect all depends upon it, whether for support or for reformation. The dignity of every occupation wholly depends upon the quantity and the kind of virtue that may be exerted in it. As all great qualities of the mind which operate in public, and are not merely suffering and passive, require force for their display, I had almost said for their unequivocal existence, the revenue, which is the spring of all power, becomes in its administration, the sphere of every active virtue. Public virtue, being of a nature magnificent and splendid, instituted for great things, and conversant about great concerns, requires abundant scope and room, and cannot spread and grow under confinement, and in circumstances straitened, narrow, and sordid. Through the revenue alone the body politic can act in its true genius and character, and therefore it will display just as much of its collective virtue, and as much of that virtue which may characterise those who move it, and are, as it were, its life and guiding principle, as it is possessed of a just revenue. For from hence not only magnanimity, and liberality, and beneficence, and fortitude, and providence, and the tutelary protection of all good

The original design was the rectification of finance.

10

This is the test of skill. Its fundamental importance.

20

Revenue being the source of power gives scope for every virtue.

30

By a just revenue a nation can fulfil its high purpose.

40

Both the generous and the self denying virtues are called into exercise.

Hence the sciences of finance are in high esteem,

Nations also improve with the growth of revenue;

and will, so long as just proportion to private wealth is maintained.

A progressive Science; diminishing causes of distress.

France had cause both to preserve and to change.

We consider only obvious duty.

arts, derive their food, and the growth of their organs, but continence, and self-denial, and labour, and vigilance, and frugality, and whatever else there is in which the mind shows itself above the appetite, are nowhere more in their proper element than in the provision and distribution of the public wealth. It is therefore not without reason that the science of speculative and practical finance, which must

10 take to its aid so many auxiliary branches of knowledge, stands high in the estimation not only of the ordinary sort, but of the wisest and best men ; and as this science has grown with

the progress of its object, the prosperity and improvement of nations has generally increased with the increase of the revenues ; and they will both continue to grow and flourish, as long as the balance between what is left to strengthen the efforts of individuals, and what

20 is collected for the common efforts of the State, bear to each other a due reciprocal proportion, and are kept in a close correspondence and communication. And perhaps it may be owing to the greatness of revenues, and to the urgency of State necessities, that old abuses in

the constitution of finances are discovered, and their true nature and rational theory comes to be more perfectly understood; insomuch that a smaller revenue might have been more distressing in one period than a far greater is

30 found to be in another ; the proportionate wealth even remaining the same. In this state of things, the French Assembly found something in their revenues to preserve, to secure, and wisely to administer, as well as to abrogate and alter. Though their proud assumption might justify the severest tests, yet in trying their abilities on their financial proceedings, I

40 would only consider what is the plain, obvious duty of a common finance minister, and try them upon that, and not upon models of ideal perfection.

371. The objects of a financier are, then, to secure an ample revenue; to impose it with judgment and equality; to employ it economically; and, when necessity obliges him to make use of credit, to secure its foundations in that instance, and for ever, by the clearness and candour of his proceedings, the exactness of his calculations, and the solidity of his funds. On these heads we may take a short and distinct view of the merits and abilities of those in the National Assembly, who have taken to themselves the management of this arduous concern. Far from any increase of revenue in their hands, I find, by a report of M. Vernier, from the committee of finances, of the second of August last, that the amount of the national revenue, as compared with its produce before the Revolution, was diminished by the sum of two hundred millions, or *eight millions sterling* of the annual income, considerably more than one-third of the whole.

10 By these let us examine.

First fact: revenue has largely fallen.

372. If this be the result of great ability, never surely was ability displayed in a more distinguished manner, or with so powerful an effect. No common folly, no vulgar incapacity, no ordinary official negligence, even no official crime, no corruption, no peculation, hardly any direct hostility which we have seen in the modern world, could in so short a time have made so complete an overthrow of the finances, and with them, of the strength of a great kingdom.—*Cedo qui vestram rempublicam tantam amisistis tam cito?*

30 An extraordinary result, and great loss of strength.

373. The sophisters and declaimers, as soon as the Assembly met, began with decrying the ancient constitution of the revenue in many of its most essential branches, such as the public monopoly of salt. They charged it, as truly as unwisely, with being ill-contrived, oppressive, and partial. This representation 40 they were not satisfied to make use of in

The theorists denounced former taxation, especially the salt tax;

A financier's aims; and

essential requirements.

and passed a resolution against it, yet made it more general.

The other provinces refused to bear any share.

The Assembly could not devise and enforce any equivalent.

The salt provinces took courage and repudiated it.

Other repudiations followed.

Have they imposed new, fair and unfettering taxes?

speeches preliminary to some plan of reform; they declared it in a solemn resolution or public sentence, as it were judicially, passed upon it; and this they dispersed throughout the nation. At the time they passed the decree, with the same gravity they ordered the same absurd, oppressive, and partial tax to be paid, until they could find a revenue to replace it. The consequence was inevitable. The provinces

10 which had been always exempted from this salt monopoly, some of whom were charged with other contributions, perhaps equivalent, were totally disinclined to bear any part of the burthen, which by an equal distribution was to redeem the others. As to the Assembly, occupied as it was with the declaration and violation of the rights of men, and with their arrangements for general confusion, it had neither leisure nor capacity to contrive, nor  
20 authority to enforce, any plan of any kind relative to the replacing the tax or equalising it, or compensating the provinces, or for conducting their minds to any scheme of accommodation with the other districts which were to be relieved.

374. The people of the salt provinces, impatient under taxes, damned by the authority which had directed their payment, very soon found their patience exhausted. They  
30 thought themselves as skilful in demolishing as the Assembly could be. They relieved themselves by throwing off the whole burthen. Animated by this example, each district, or part of a district, judging of its own grievance by its own feeling, and of its remedy by its own opinion, did as it pleased with other taxes.

375. We are next to see how they have conducted themselves in contriving equal impositions, proportioned to the means of the  
40 citizens, and the least likely to lean heavy on the active capital employed in the generation

of that private wealth from whence the public fortune must be derived. By suffering the several districts, and several of the individuals in each district, to judge of what part of the old revenue they might withhold, instead of better principles of equality, a new inequality was introduced of the most oppressive kind. Payments were regulated by dispositions. The parts of the kingdom which were the most submissive, the most orderly, or the most affectionate to the commonwealth, bore the whole burthen of the state. Nothing turns out to be so oppressive and unjust as a feeble government. To fill up all the deficiencies in the old impositions, and the new deficiencies of every kind which were to be expected, what remained to a state without authority? The National Assembly called for a voluntary benevolence; for a fourth part of the income of all the citizens, to be estimated on the honour of those who were to pay. They obtained something more than could be rationally calculated, but what was far indeed from answerable to their real necessities, and much less to their fond expectations. Rational people could have hoped for little from this their tax in the disguise of a benevolence; a tax weak, ineffective, and unequal; a tax by which luxury, avarice, and selfishness were screened, and the load thrown upon productive capital, upon integrity, generosity, and public spirit—a tax of regulation upon virtue. At length the mask is thrown off, and they are now trying means (with little success) of exacting their benevolence by force.

376. This benevolence, the rickety offspring of weakness, was to be supported by another resource, the twin brother of the same prolific imbecility. The patriotic donations were to make good the failure of the patriotic contribution. John Doe was to become security for

The option granted to districts has introduced a new inequality;

the loyal become the oppressed.

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The Assembly invites a voluntary offering of one fourth of income.

Such as only active integrity fully responds to; really a tax on virtue.

Now it is being made compulsory.

Next step, the donation

of things valuable to the owners, yielding little to the state.

This is an old method of helpless despotism; tried by Louis XIV and XV.

A desperate expedient, resorted to in a time of peace.

The childishness of the method outweighs the results.

Such plans cannot be continuous.

Richard Roe. By this scheme they took things of much price from the giver, comparatively of small value to the receiver; they ruined several trades; they pillaged the crown of its ornaments, the churches of their plate, and the people of their personal decorations.

10 The invention of these juvenile pretenders to liberty was in reality nothing more than a servile imitation of one of the poorest resources of doting despotism. They took an old huge full-bottomed periwig out of the wardrobe of the antiquated frippery of Louis the Fourteenth, to cover the premature baldness of the National Assembly. They produced this old-fashioned formal folly, though it had been so abundantly exposed in the Memoirs of the Duke de St. Simon, if to reasonable men it had wanted any arguments to display its mischief and insufficiency. A device of the same kind

20 was tried in my memory by Louis the Fifteenth, but it answered at no time. However, the necessities of ruinous wars were some excuse for desperate projects. The deliberations of calamity are rarely wise. But here was a season for disposition and providence. It was in a time of profound peace, then enjoyed for five years, and promising a much longer continuance, that they had recourse to this desperate trifling. They were

30 sure to lose more reputation by sporting, in their serious situation, with these toys and playthings of finance, which have filled half their journals, than could possibly be compensated by the poor temporary supply which they afforded. It seemed as if those who adopted such projects were wholly ignorant of their circumstances, or wholly unequal to their necessities. Whatever virtue may be in these devices, it is obvious that neither the 40 patriotic gifts, nor the patriotic contribution, can ever be resorted to again. The

resources of public folly are soon exhausted. The whole indeed of their scheme of revenue is to make, by any artifice, an appearance of a full reservoir for the hour, whilst at the same time they cut off the springs and living fountains of perennial supply. The account not long since furnished by M. Necker was meant, without question, to be favourable. He gives a flattering view of the means of getting through the year; but he expresses, as it is natural he should, some apprehension for that which was to succeed. On this last prognostic, instead of entering into the grounds of this apprehension, in order, by a proper foresight, to prevent the prognosticated evil, M. Necker receives a sort of friendly reprimand from the president of the Assembly.

377. As to their other schemes of taxation, it is impossible to say anything of them with certainty; because they have not yet had their operation: but nobody is so sanguine as to imagine they will fill up any perceptible part of the wide gaping breach which their incapacity has made in their revenues. At present the state of their treasury sinks every day more and more in cash, and swells more and more in fictitious representation. When so little within or without is now found but paper, the representative not of opulence but of want, the creature not of credit but of power, they imagine that our flourishing state in England is owing to that bank-paper, and not the bank-paper to the flourishing condition of our commerce, to the solidity of our credit, and to the total exclusion of all idea of power from any part of the transaction. They forget that, in England, not one shilling of paper-money of any description is received but of choice; that the whole has had its origin in cash actually deposited; and that it is convertible at pleasure, in an instant, and without the

They are for  
the moment.

Necker is  
anxious for next  
year:

but the As-  
sembly has no  
prevision.

Other schemes  
will yield little.

20

But hope is  
centred in the  
assignats.

They imagine  
English pros-  
perity is due to  
bank-notes; the  
reverse of the  
fact.

The funda-  
mental conditions.

40

Our notes have cash behind them, and none is obligatory.

No public security is enforced.

Our notes facilitate the circulation of coin, and indicate prosperity.

What of economy? Is this duty made to compensate?

No; expenses are increased all round.

Not economy but cruelty.

Charges are now more burdensome.

smallest loss, into cash again. Our paper is of value in commerce, because in law it is of none. It is powerful on 'Change, because in Westminster Hall it is impotent. In payment of a debt of twenty shillings, a creditor may refuse all the paper of the bank of England. Nor is there amongst us a single public security, of any quality or nature whatsoever, that is enforced by authority. In fact it might be easily shown that our paper wealth, instead of lessening the real coin, has a tendency to increase it; instead of being a substitute for money, it only facilitates its entry, its exit, and its circulation; that it is the symbol of prosperity, and not the badge of distress. Never was a scarcity of cash, and an exuberance of paper, a subject of complaint in this nation.

378. Well! but a lessening of prodigal expenses, and the economy which has been introduced by the virtuous and sapient Assembly, make amends for the losses sustained in the receipt of revenue. In this at least they have fulfilled the duty of a financier.—Have those who say so looked at the expenses of the National Assembly itself? of the municipalities? of the city of Paris? of the increased pay of the two armies? of the new police? of the new judicatures? Have they even carefully compared the present pension list with the former? These politicians have been cruel, not economical. Comparing the expenses of the former prodigal government and its relation to the then revenues with the expenses of this new system as opposed to the state of its new treasury, I believe the present will be found beyond all comparison more chargeable.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The reader will observe that I have but lightly touched (my plan demanded nothing more) on the condition of the French finances, as connected with the demands upon them. If I had intended to do otherwise, the materials in my hands for such a task are not altogether perfect. On this subject I refer the reader to M. de Calonne's work;

379. It remains only to consider the proofs of financial ability, furnished by the present French managers when they are to raise supplies on credit. Here I am a little at a stand; for credit, properly speaking, they have none. The credit of the ancient government was not indeed the best; but they could always, on some terms, command money, not only at home, but from most of the countries of Europe where a surplus capital was accumulated; and the credit 10 of that government was improving daily. The establishment of a system of liberty would of course be supposed to give it new strength: and so it would actually have done, if a system of liberty had been established. What offers has their government of pretended liberty had from Holland, from Hamburg, from Switzerland, from Genoa, from England, for a dealing in their paper? Why should these nations of commerce and economy enter into any pecuniary dealings 20 with a people who attempt to reverse the very nature of things; amongst whom they see the debtor prescribing at the point of the bayonet, the medium of his solvency to the creditor; discharging one of his engagements with another; turning his very penury into his resource; and paying his interest with his rags?

380. Their fanatical confidence in the omnipotence of church plunder has induced these philosophers to overlook all care of the public estate, just as the dream of the philosopher's stone induces dupes, under the more plausible delusion of the hermetic art, to neglect all

and the tremendous display that he has made of the havoc and devastation in the public estate, and in all the affairs of France, caused by the presumptuous good intentions of ignorance and incapacity. Such effects those causes will always produce. Looking over that account with a pretty strict eye, and with perhaps too much rigour, deducting everything which may be placed to the account of a financier out of place, who might be supposed by his enemies desirous of making the most of his cause, I believe it will be found that a more salutary lesson of caution against the daring spirit of innovators than what has been supplied at the expense of France, never was at any time furnished to mankind.

Do they raise  
by loans ?

The former  
government had  
credit which was  
growing, and  
which reform  
would have  
strengthened.

Wealthy com-  
munities abroad  
put no confidence  
in this arbitrary  
and unnatural  
constitution.

Their con-  
fidence in the  
assignats has made  
them reckless.

They neglect rational means, trusting to the magic of their sacrilege.

For debts, pensions, ships, they trust to *assignats*.

The only differences of parties being as to the number.

Old *assignats*, when depreciated, are supplemented by new ones.

The plan is monotonous like the cuckoo, and

rational means of improving their fortunes. With these philosophic financiers, this universal medicine made of church mummy is to cure all the evils of the state. These gentlemen perhaps do not believe a great deal in the miracles of piety; but it cannot be questioned that they have an undoubting faith in the prodigies of sacrilege. Is there a debt which presses them?—Issue *assignats*. Are compensations to be made, or a maintenance decreed to those whom they have robbed of their freehold in their office, or expelled from their profession?—*Assignats*. Is a fleet to be fitted out?—*Assignats*. If sixteen millions sterling of these *assignats*, forced on the people, leave the wants of the state as urgent as ever—issue, says one, thirty millions sterling of *assignats*—says another, issue fourscore millions more of *assignats*. The only difference among their financial factions is on the greater or the lesser quantity of *assignats* to be imposed on the public sufferance. They are all professors of *assignats*. Even those whose natural good sense and knowledge of commerce, not obliterated by philosophy, furnish decisive arguments against this delusion, conclude their arguments by proposing the emission of *assignats*. I suppose they must talk of *assignats*, as no other language would be understood. All experience of their inefficacy does not in the least discourage them. Are the old *assignats* depreciated at market?—What is the remedy? Issue new *assignats*.—*Mais si maladia, opinatrica, non vult se garire, quid illi facere?* *assignare—postea assignare; ensuita assignare*. The word is a trifle altered. The Latin of your present doctors may be better than that of your old comedy; their wisdom and the variety of their resources are the same. They have not more notes in their song than the cuckoo; though, far from the softness of that harbinger of summer and plenty, their

voice is as harsh and as ominous as that of the raven.

harsh like the raven.

381. Who but the most desperate adventurers in philosophy and finance could at all have thought of destroying the settled revenue of the State, the sole security for the public credit, in the hope of rebuilding it with the materials of confiscated property? If, however, an excessive zeal for the State should have led a pious and venerable prelate (by anticipation 10 a father of the church<sup>1</sup>) to pillage his own order, and, for the good of the church and people, to take upon himself the place of grand financier of confiscation, and comptroller-general of sacrilege, he and his coadjutors were, in my opinion, bound to show, by their subsequent conduct, that they knew something of the office they assumed. When they had resolved to appropriate to the *Fisc* a certain portion of the landed property of their conquered country, it was their business to render their bank a real fund of credit, as far as such a bank was capable of becoming so.

Only reckless adventurers would have destroyed settled revenue in hope of its replacement through confiscation.

382. To establish a current circulating credit upon any *Land-bank* under any circumstances whatsoever, has hitherto proved difficult at the very least. The attempt has commonly ended in bankruptcy. But when the Assembly were led, through a contempt of moral, to a defiance of economical, principles, 20 it might at least have been expected that nothing would be omitted on their part to lessen this difficulty, to prevent any aggravation of this bankruptcy. It might be expected that, to render your *Land-bank* tolerable, every means would be adopted that could display openness and candour in the statement of the security; everything which could aid the recovery of the demand. To take things in their

But doing so they should have shown financial capacity.

The task of establishing a currency on a land-bank was difficult.

Perfect openness was necessary.

<sup>1</sup> La Bruyère of Bossuet.

A parallel.

The necessity  
of mortgaging.

A full financial statement,  
and a careful estimate.

Trustees.

Details of management.

Then might come the aid of outside monied parties.

The situation would thus be clear to the money dealers,

who would fear only the restoration of the property to its true owners.

Such true and frank statement was necessary, both to put the land-bank above suspicion,

most favourable point of view, your condition was that of a man of a large landed estate, which he wished to dispose of for the discharge of a debt, and the supply of certain services. Not being able instantly to sell, you wished to mortgage. What would a man of fair intentions, and a commonly clear understanding, do in such circumstances? Ought he not first to ascertain the gross value

10 of the estate; the charges of its management and disposition; the encumbrances perpetual and temporary of all kinds that affect it; then, striking a net surplus, to calculate the just value of the security? When that surplus (the only security to the creditor) had been clearly ascertained, and properly vested in the hands of trustees; then he would indicate the parcels to be sold, and the time and conditions of sale; after this, he would admit the public creditor, 20 if he chose it, to subscribe his stock into this new fund; or he might receive proposals for an *assignat* from those who would advance money to purchase this species of security.

383. This would be to proceed like men of business, methodically and rationally; and on the only principles of public and private credit that have an existence. The dealer would then know exactly what he purchased; and the only doubt which could hang upon his mind would be the dread of the resumption of the spoil, which one day might be made (perhaps with an addition of punishment) from the sacrilegious gripe of those execrable wretches who could become purchasers at the auction of their innocent fellow-citizens.

384. An open and exact statement of the clear value of the property, and of the time, the circumstances, and the place of sale, were all necessary, to efface as much as possible the stigma that has hitherto been branded on

every kind of Land-bank. It became necessary on another principle, that is, on account of a pledge of faith previously given on that subject, that their future fidelity in a slippery concern might be established by their adherence to their first engagement. When they had finally determined on a state resource from church booty, they came, on the 14th of April, 1790, to a solemn resolution on the subject; and pledged themselves to their country, “that in 10 the statement of the public charges for each year there should be brought to account a sum sufficient for defraying the expenses of the R.C.A. religion, the support of the ministers at the altars, the relief of the poor, the pensions to the ecclesiastics, secular as well as regular, of the one and of the other sex, *in order that the estates and goods which are at the disposal of the nation may be disengaged of all charges, and employed by the representatives, or the legislative 20 body, to the great and most pressing exigencies of the state.*” They further engaged, on the same day, that the sum necessary for the year 1791 should be forthwith determined.

385. In this resolution they admit it their duty to show distinctly the expense of the above objects, which, by other resolutions, they had before engaged should be first in the order of provision. They admit that they ought to show the estate clear and disengaged of all 30 charges, and that they should show it immediately. Have they done this immediately, or at any time? Have they ever furnished a rent-roll of the immovable estates, or given in an inventory of the movable effects, which they confiscate to their assignats? In what manner they can fulfil their engagements of holding out to public service “an estate disengaged of all charges,” without authenticating the value of the estate, or the quantum of the charges, I 40 leave it to their English admirers to explain.

and to fulfil a solemn pledge

involving (1) church expenses;

and (2) the clearing of the estate from charges.

But they have shown neither the value of the estates nor the charges,

while they have issued paper enormously.

(3) application to the exigencies of the public service.

The application to state needs is unqualified.

But their plan has defeated itself.

I learn from M. de Calonne that the church expenditure alone is greatly in excess of the income of the estates.

Their scheme is bankrupt.

Instantly upon this assurance, and previously to any one step towards making it good, they issue, on the credit of so handsome a declaration, sixteen millions sterling of their paper. This was manly. Who, after this masterly stroke, can doubt of their abilities in finance?— But then, before any other emission of these financial *indulgences*, they took care at least to make good their original promise!—If such estimate, either of the value of the estate or the amount of the encumbrances, has been made, it has escaped me. I never heard of it.

386. At length they have spoken out, and they have made a full discovery of their abominable fraud, in holding out the church lands as a security for any debts or any service whatsoever. They rob only to enable them to cheat; but in a very short time they defeat the ends both of the robbery and the fraud, by making out accounts for other purposes, which blow up their whole apparatus of force and of deception. I am obliged to M. de Calonne for his reference to the document which proves this extraordinary fact; it had by some means escaped me. Indeed it was not necessary to make out my assertion as to the breach of faith on the declaration of the 14th of April, 1790. By a report of their committee it now appears that the charge of keeping up the reduced ecclesiastical establishments, and other expenses attendant on religion, and maintaining the religious of both sexes, retained or pensioned, and the other concomitant expenses of the same nature, which they have brought upon themselves by this convulsion in property, exceeds the income of the estates acquired by it in the enormous sum of two millions sterling annually; besides a debt of seven millions and upwards. These are the calculating powers of imposture! This is the finance of philosophy! This is the result of all the

delusions held out to engage a miserable people in rebellion, murder, and sacrilege, and to make them prompt and zealous instruments in the ruin of their country! Never did a state, in any case, enrich itself by the confiscations of the citizens. This new experiment has succeeded like all the rest. Every honest mind, every true lover of liberty and humanity, must rejoice to find that injustice is not always good policy, nor rapine the high road to riches. I subjoin with pleasure, in a note, the able and spirited observations of M. de Calonne on this subject.<sup>1</sup>

10

387. In order to persuade the world of the bottomless resource of ecclesiastical confiscation, the Assembly have proceeded to other confiscations of estates in offices, which could not be done with any common colour without being compensated out of this grand confiscation of landed property. They have thrown upon this fund, which was to show a surplus, disengaged of all charges, a new charge—namely, the compensation to the whole body of the disbanded judicature; and of all suppressed offices and estates; a charge which I cannot ascertain, but

Confiscations never enrich.

This has failed like others.

Yet on it they have thrown new charges of compensation to suppressed estates and offices, including the parlements.

20

<sup>1</sup> "Ce n'est point à l'assemblée entière que je m'adresse ici ; je ne parle qu'à ceux qui l'égarent, en lui cachant sous des gazes séduisantes le but où ils l'entraînent. C'est à eux que je dis : votre objet, vous n'en disconviendrez pas, c'est d'ôter tout espoir au clergé, et de consommer sa ruine ; c'est-là, en ne vous soupçonnant d'aucune combinaison de cupidité, d'aucun regard sur le jeu des effets publics, c'est-là ce qu'on doit croire que vous avez en vue dans la terrible opération que vous proposez ; c'est ce qui doit en être le fruit. Mais le peuple que vous y intéressez, quel avantage peut-il y trouver ? En vous servant sans cesse de lui, que faites vous pour lui ? Rien, absolument rien ; et, au contraire, vous faites ce qui ne conduit qu'à l'accabler de nouvelles charges. Vous avez rejeté, à son préjudice, une offre de 400 millions, dont l'acceptation pouvoit devenir un moyen de soulagement en sa faveur ; et à cette ressource, aussi profitable que legitimate, vous avez substitué une injustice ruineuse, qui, de votre propre aveu, charge le trésor public, et par conséquent le peuple, d'un surcroit de dépense annuelle de 50 millions au moins, et d'un remboursement de 150 millions.

"Malheureux peuple ! voilà ce que vous vaut en dernier résultat l'expropriation de l'Eglise, et la dureté des décrets taxateurs du traitement des ministres d'une religion bienfaisante ; et désormais ils seront à votre charge : leurs charités soulageoient les pauvres ; et vous allez être imposés pour subvenir à leur entretien!"---*De l'Etat de la France*, p. 81. See also p. 92, and the following pages.

There is also the interest for the first assignats.

The expense of the management by the municipalities has not been made known.

All such obligatory charges should be stated, and balanced with the income.

Only after the full adjustment of these can the creditors begin to use the lands.

All is in darkness, but the assignats are forced on the people.

They talk of a grand future.

which unquestionably amounts to many French millions. Another of the new charges is a annuity of four hundred and eighty thousand pounds sterling, to be paid (if they choose to keep faith) by daily payments, for the interest of the first assignats. Have they ever given themselves the trouble to state fairly the expense of the management of the church lands in the hands of the municipalities to whose care, skill and diligence, and that of their legion of unknown under-agents, they have chosen to commit the charge of the forfeited estates, and the consequence of which had been so ably pointed out by the bishop of Nancy?

388. But it is unnecessary to dwell on these obvious heads of encumbrance. Have they made out any clear state of the grand encumbrance of all, I mean the whole of the general and municipal establishments of all sorts, and compared it with the regular income by revenue? Every deficiency in these becomes a charge on the confiscated estate, before the creditor can plant his cabbages on an acre of church property. There is no other prop than this confiscation to keep the whole state from tumbling to the ground. In this situation they have purposely covered all, that they ought industriously to have cleared, with a thick fog; and then, blindfold themselves, like bulls that shut their eyes when they push, they drive, by the point of the bayonets, their slaves, blindfolded indeed no worse than their lords, to take their fictions for currencies, and to swallow down paper pills by thirty-four millions sterling at a dose. Then they proudly lay in their claim to a future credit, on failure of all their past engagements, and at a time when (if in such a matter anything can be clear) it is clear that the surplus estates will never answer even the first of their mortgages, I mean that of the four hundred millions (or sixteen millions sterling)

of *assignats*. In all this procedure I can discern neither the solid sense of plain dealing, nor the subtle dexterity of ingenious fraud. The objections within the Assembly to pulling up the flood-gates for this inundation of fraud are unanswered; but they are thoroughly refuted by a hundred thousand financiers in the street. These are the numbers by which the metaphysic arithmeticians compute. These are the grand calculations on which a philosophical public credit is founded in France. They cannot raise supplies; but they can raise mobs. Let them rejoice in the applauses of the club at Dundee, for their wisdom and patriotism in having thus applied the plunder of the citizens to the service of the state. I hear of no address upon this subject from the directors of the bank of England; though their approbation would be of a *little* more weight in the scale of credit than that of the club at Dundee. 20 But, to do justice to the club, I believe the gentlemen who compose it to be wiser than they appear; that they will be less liberal of their money than of their addresses; and that they would not give a dog's-ear of their most rumpled and ragged Scotch paper for twenty of your fairest assignats.

389. Early in this year the Assembly issued paper to the amount of sixteen millions sterling: what must have been the state into 30 which the Assembly has brought your affairs, that the relief afforded by so vast a supply has been hardly perceptible? This paper also felt an almost immediate depreciation of five per cent., which in a little time came to about seven. The effect of these assignats on the receipt of the revenue is remarkable. M. Necker found that the collectors of the revenue, who received in coin, paid the treasury in *assignats*. The collectors made seven per 40

But there is neither sense nor ingenuity.

Criticisms are met by mobs,

but there is no approval by experts.

A Scotch club.

Vast numbers of assignats were issued,

causing immediate depreciation,

of which the collectors took advantage;

while the Government, buying metal, incurred loss.

Coin was needed to pay the army.

Necker's vain attempt.

The Assembly's dilemma : no cash or no credit.

They take the paper, and make a bold false declaration.

cent. by thus receiving in money, and accounting in depreciated paper. It was not very difficult to foresee that this must be inevitable. It was, however, not the less embarrassing. M. Necker was obliged (I believe, for a considerable part, in the market of London) to buy gold and silver for the mint, which amounted to about twelve thousand pounds above the value of the commodity gained. That minister was

10 of opinion that, whatever their secret nutritive virtue might be, the state could not live upon *assignats* alone; that some real silver was necessary, particularly for the satisfaction of those who, having iron in their hands, were not likely to distinguish themselves for patience, when they should perceive that whilst an increase of pay was held out to them in real money, it was again to be fraudulently drawn back by depreciated paper. The minister,

20 in this very natural distress, applied to the Assembly that they should order the collectors to pay in specie what in specie they had received. It could not escape him that if the treasury paid three per cent. for the use of a currency which should be returned seven per cent. worse than the minister issued it, such a dealing could not very greatly tend to enrich the public. The Assembly took no notice of his recommendation. They were in this

30 dilemma—if they continued to receive the assignats, cash must become an alien to their treasury: if the treasury should refuse those paper *amulets*, or should discountenance them in any degree, they must destroy the credit of their sole resource. They seem then to have made their option; and to have given some sort of credit to their paper by taking it themselves; at the same time in their speeches they made a sort of swaggering declaration, something, I rather think, above legislative competence; that is, that there is no difference in

value between metallic money and their assignats. This was a good, stout, proof article of faith, pronounced under an anathema, by the venerable fathers of this philosophic synod. *Credat who will*—certainly not *Judeus Apella*.

390. A noble indignation rises in the minds of your popular leaders, on hearing the magic lantern in their show of finance compared to the fraudulent exhibitions of Mr. Law. They cannot bear to hear the sands of his Mississippi compared with the rock of the church, on which they build their system. Pray let them suppress this glorious spirit, until they show to the world what piece of solid ground there is for their assignats, which they have not pre-occupied by other charges. They do injustice to that great, mother fraud, to compare it with their degenerate imitation. It is not true that Law built solely on a speculation concerning the Mississippi. He added 20 the East India trade; he added the African trade; he added the farms of all the farmed revenue of France. All these together unquestionably could not support the structure which the public enthusiasm, not he, chose to build upon these bases. But these were, however, in comparison, generous delusions. They supposed, and they aimed at, an increase of the commerce of France. They opened to it the whole range of the two hemispheres. They did 30 not think of feeding France from its own substance. A grand imagination found in this flight of commerce something to captivate. It was where-withal to dazzle the eye of an eagle. It was not made to entice the smell of a mole, nuzzling and burying himself in his mother earth, as yours is. Men were not then quite shrunk from their natural dimensions by a degrading and sordid philosophy, and fitted for low and vulgar deceptions. Above all, remember that in imposing on the imagination, the 40

Comparison  
with a former  
fraud.

The present  
scheme is worse,  
for the whole of  
the assignats are  
required for ex-  
traneous charges.

Law's scheme  
was intended to  
create commerce,  
while the present  
is self-destructive.

They differ as  
an eagle and a  
mole.

Men had then  
great ideas,

but the new  
light is darkness.

Another o f  
the projects ;

less ludicrous  
than disgusting.

Their methods  
are the contri-  
vances of mer-  
cantile fraud.

They resemble  
bankrupts.

But they are  
still confident,

and boastful,

then managers of the system made a compliment to the freedom of men. In their fraud there was no mixture of force. This was reserved to our time, to quench the little glimmerings of reason which might break in upon the solid darkness of this enlightened age.

391. On recollection, I have said nothing of a scheme of finance which may be urged in favour of the abilities of these gentlemen, and which has been introduced with great pomp, though not yet finally adopted, in the National Assembly. It comes with something solid in aid of the credit of the paper circulation; and much has been said of its utility and its elegance. I mean the project for coining into money the bells of the suppressed churches. This is their alchemy. There are some follies which baffle argument, which go beyond ridicule, and which excite no feeling in us but disgust; and therefore I say no more upon it.

392. It is as little worth remarking any further upon all their drawing and re-drawing, on their circulation for putting off the evil day, on the play between the treasury and the *Caisse d'Escompte*, and on all these old, exploded contrivances of mercantile fraud, now exalted into policy of state. The revenue will not be trifled with. The prattling about the rights of men will not be accepted in payment for a biscuit or a pound of gunpowder. Here then the metaphysicians descend from their airy speculations, and faithfully follow examples. What examples? The examples of bankrupts. But, defeated, baffled, disgraced, when their breath, their strength, their inventions, their fancies desert them, their confidence still maintains its ground. In the manifest failure of their abilities, they take credit for their benevolence. When the revenue disappears in their hands, they have

the presumption, in some of their late proceedings, to value *themselves* on the relief given to the people. They did not relieve the people. If they entertained such intentions, why did they order the obnoxious taxes to be paid? The people relieved themselves in spite of the Assembly.

and take credit for the relief which the people assumed in spite of them.

393. But waiving all discussion on the parties who may claim the merit of this fallacious relief, has there been, in effect, any relief to the people in any form? Mr. Bailly, one of the grand agents of paper circulation, lets you into the nature of this relief. His speech to the National Assembly contained a high and laboured panegyric on the inhabitants of Paris, for the constancy and unbroken resolution with which they have borne their distress and misery. A fine picture of public felicity! What! great courage and unconquerable firmness of mind to endure benefits and sustain redress? One would think from the speech of this learned Lord Mayor that the Parisians, for this twelve-month past, had been suffering the straits of some dreadful blockade; that Henry the Fourth had been stopping up the avenues to their supply, and Sully thundering with his ordnance at the gates of Paris; when in reality they are besieged by no other enemies than their own madness and folly, their own credulity and perverseness. But Mr. Bailly will sooner thaw the eternal ice of his Atlantic regions than restore the central heat to Paris, whilst it remains "smitten with the cold, dry, petrific mace" of a false and unfeeling philosophy. Some time after this speech, that is, on the thirteenth of last August, the same magistrate, giving an account of his government at the bar of the same Assembly, expresses himself as follows: "In the month of July, 1789" (the period of everlasting commemoration), "the finances of the city of Paris were *yet* in good order; the expenditure

Are the people benefitted?

Mr. Bailly congratulates Paris for firmness in distress,

like that of a blockade.

But the false philosophy will prevent recovery.

The finances of Paris; failure after the Revolution, notwithstanding

standing the aid  
of the provinces.

Comparis on  
with a n c i e n t  
Rome: the city  
is maintained  
by subject pro-  
vinces; and if des-  
potism follows  
the despot must  
please the city.

The talk of  
relief is a cruel  
deception.

Relief without  
gain is inferior to  
increased contribu-  
tion with pro-  
portionate gain.

The politi-  
cian's task ; a  
balancing.

- was counterbalanced by the receipt, and she had at that time a million " (forty thousand pounds sterling) "in bank. The expenses which she has been constrained to incur, *subsequent to the Revolution*, amount to 2,500,000 livres. From these expenses, and the great falling off in the product of *the free gifts*, not only a momentary, but a *total*, want of money has taken place." This is the Paris upon whose nourishment, in the course of the last year, such immense sums, drawn from the vitals of all France, have been expended. As long as Paris stands in the place of ancient Rome, so long she will be maintained by the subject provinces. It is an evil inevitably attendant on the dominion of sovereign democratic republics. As it happened in Rome, it may survive that republican domination which gave rise to it. In that case despotism itself must submit to the vices of popularity. Rome, under her emperors, united the evils of both systems; and this unnatural combination was one great cause of her ruin.
394. To tell the people that they are relieved by the dilapidation of their public estate, is a cruel and insolent imposition. Statesmen, before they valued themselves on the relief given to the people by the destruction of their revenue, ought first to have carefully attended to the solution of this problem: Whether it be more advantageous to the people to pay considerably, and to gain in proportion; or to gain little or nothing, and to be disburthened of all contribution? My mind is made up to decide in favour of the first proposition. Experience is with me, and, I believe, the best opinions also. To keep a balance between the power of acquisition on the part of the subject and the demands he is to answer on the part of the State, is the fundamental part of the skill of a true politician. The means of acquisition are prior in time and

in arrangement. Good order is the foundation of all good things. To be enabled to acquire, the people, without being servile, must be tractable and obedient. The magistrate must have his reverence, the laws their authority. The body of the people must not find the principles of natural subordination by art rooted out of their minds. They must respect that property of which they cannot partake. They must labour to obtain what by labour can be obtained ; and when they find, as they commonly do, the success disproportioned to the endeavour, they must be taught their consolation in the final proportions of eternal justice. Of this consolation whoever deprives them, deadens their industry, and strikes at the root of all acquisition as of all conservation. He that does this is the cruel oppressor, the merciless enemy of the poor and wretched ; at the same time that by his wicked speculations he exposes the fruits of successful industry, and the accumulations of fortune, to the plunder of the negligent, the disappointed, and the unprosperous.

395. Too many of the financiers by profession are apt to see nothing in revenue but banks, and circulations, and annuities on lives, and tontines, and perpetual rents, and all the small wares of the shop. In a settled order of the State, these things are not to be slighted, nor is the skill in them to be held of trivial estimation. They are good, but then only good, when they assume the effects of that settled order, and are built upon it. But when men think that these beggarly contrivances may supply a resource for the evils which result from breaking up the foundations of public order, and from causing or suffering the principles of property to be subverted, they will, in the ruin of their country, leave a melancholy and lasting monument of the effect of preposterous politics, and presumptuous, short-sighted, narrow-minded wisdom.

Power of raising revenue is first:

for the maintenance of laws, and property.

10

The ultimate consolation.

20

The atheist takes this away, and also exposes the fruits of industry to plunder.

30

Financiers look at details, but these are important only when resting on a settled order.

40

They are no resource when fundamental principles are subverted.

Concluding observations.

Liberty requires wisdom and virtue, otherwise it is a peril.

Fine sentiments are excellent. I still enjoy the poets.

Popularity is helpful and pleasant.

But in a crisis these things are insignificant.

Definition of a free government.

The needful qualities.

Your leaders seem very deficient.

396. The effects of the incapacity shown by the popular leaders in all the great members of the commonwealth are to be covered with the "all-atoning name" of liberty. In some people I see great liberty indeed; in many, if not in the most, an oppressive, degrading servitude. But what is liberty without wisdom, and without virtue? It is the greatest of all possible evils; for it is folly, vice, and madness, without tuition or restraint. Those who know what virtuous liberty is, cannot bear to see it disgraced by incapable heads, on account of their having high-sounding words in their mouths. Grand, swelling sentiments of liberty I am sure I do not despise. They warm the heart; they enlarge and liberalise our minds; they animate our courage in a time of conflict. Old as I am, I read the fine raptures of Lucan and Corneille with pleasure. Neither do I wholly condemn the little arts and devices of popularity. They facilitate the carrying of many points of moment; they keep the people together; they refresh the mind in its exertions; and they diffuse occasional gaiety over the severe brow of moral freedom. Every politician ought to sacrifice to the graces; and to join compliance with reason. But in such an undertaking as that in France, all these subsidiary sentiments and artifices are of little avail. To make a government requires no great prudence. Settle the seat of power; teach obedience: and the work is done. To give freedom is still more easy. It is not necessary to guide; it only requires to let go the rein. But to form a *free government*; that is, to temper together these opposite elements of liberty and restraint in one consistent work, requires much thought, deep reflection, a sagacious, powerful, and combining mind. This I do not find in those who take the lead in the National Assembly. Perhaps they are not so miserably deficient as they

appear. I rather believe it. It would put them below the common level of human understanding. But when the leaders choose to make themselves bidders at an auction of popularity, their talents, in the construction of the State, will be of no service. They will become flatterers instead of legislators; the instruments, not the guides, of the people. If any of them should happen to propose a scheme of liberty, soberly limited, and defined with proper qualifications, he will be immediately outbid by his competitors, who will produce something more splendidly popular. Suspicions will be raised of his fidelity to his cause. Moderation will be stigmatised as the virtue of cowards, and compromise as the prudence of traitors; until, in hopes of preserving the credit which may enable him to temper, and moderate, on some occasions, the popular leader is obliged to become active in propagating doctrines, and establishing powers, that will afterwards defeat any sober purpose at which he ultimately might have aimed.

397. But am I so unreasonable as to see nothing at all that deserves commendation in the indefatigable labours of this Assembly? I do not deny that, among an infinite number of acts of violence and folly, some good may have been done. They who destroy everything certainly will remove some grievance. They who make everything new, have a chance that they may establish something beneficial. To give them credit for what they have done in virtue of the authority they have unsurped, or which can excuse them in the crimes by which that authority has been acquired, it must appear that the same things could not have been accomplished without producing such a revolution. Most assuredly they might; because almost every one of the regulations made by them, which is not very equivocal,

Able men who seek popularity are useless.

They are not guides.

10 One outvies another.

Moderation is scorned.

20 Thus the popular leader is driven to support ruinous policy.

Some good has, of course, been done.

30

But it could have been done constitutionally,

40 with consent of king and states,

and according to instructions.

Other changes are unimportant.

The bearing on Britain.

Ours is to teach not follow.

Our constitution is precious,

not in part but as a whole;

and largely on account of our conservatism.

We must guard; not excluding remedial change.

But the old outline should be maintained,

and the caution of our ancestors imitated.

was either in the cession of the king, voluntarily made at the meeting of the states, or in the concurrent instructions to the orders. Some usages have been abolished on just grounds; but they were such that if they had stood as they were to all eternity, they would little detract from the happiness and prosperity of any state. The improvements of the National Assembly are superficial, their errors fundamental.

398. Whatever they are, I wish my countrymen rather to recommend to our neighbours the example of the British constitution, than to take models from them for the improvement of our own. In the former they have got an invaluable treasure. They are not, I think, without some causes of apprehension and complaint; but these they do not owe to their constitution, but to their own conduct. I think 20 our happy situation owing to our constitution; but owing to the whole of it, and not to any part singly; owing in a great measure to what we have left standing in our several reviews and reformations, as well as to what we have altered or superadded. Our people will find employment enough for a truly patriotic, free, and independent spirit, in guarding what they possess from violation. I would not exclude alteration neither; but even when I changed, it 30 should be to preserve. I should be led to my remedy by a great grievance. In what I did, I should follow the example of our ancestors. I would make the reparation as nearly as possible in the style of the building. A politic caution, a guarded circumspection, a moral rather than a complexional timidity, were among the ruling principles of our forefathers in their most decided conduct. Not being illuminated with the light of which the gentlemen of France tell us they have got so abundant a share, they acted under a strong impression of 40

the ignorance and fallibility of mankind. He that had made them thus fallible, rewarded them for having in their conduct attended to their nature. Let us imitate their caution, if we wish to deserve their fortune, or to retain their bequests. Let us add, if we please, but let us preserve what they have left; and standing on the firm ground of the British constitution, let us be satisfied to admire, rather than attempt to follow in their desperate flights, the aéronauts of France.

10

They considered human nature, and have left us a bequest.

Let us stand on the old firm ground.

399. I have told you candidly my sentiments. I think they are not likely to alter yours. I do not know that they ought. You are young; you cannot guide, but must follow the fortune of your country. But hereafter they may be of some use to you, in some future form which your commonwealth may take. In the present it can hardly remain; but before its final settlement it may be obliged to pass, as one of our poets says, "through great varieties of untried being," and in all its transmigrations to be purified by fire and blood.

20

You, my correspondent, are young and must follow your country's transmigrations.

In the future my thoughts may be of use to you.

400. I have little to recommend my opinions but long observation and much impartiality. They come from one who has been no tool of power, no flatterer of greatness; and who in his last acts does not wish to belie the tenour of his life. They come from one, almost the whole of whose public exertion has been a struggle for the liberty of others; from one in whose breast no anger durable or vehement has ever been kindled, but by what he considered as tyranny; and who snatches from his share in the endeavours which are used by good men to discredit opulent oppression, the hours he has employed on your affairs; and who in so doing persuades himself he has not departed from his usual office: they come from one who desires honours, distinctions, and emoluments,

30

The Author's Confession:

an independent thinker,

struggling for liberty now and always;

attached also to peace and to consistency; but

40

ready to vary the  
means for the  
sake of the end,

and when one  
side is overloaded  
to throw his  
weight on the  
other.

but little ; and who expects them not at all ;  
who has no contempt for fame, and no fear of  
obloquy ; who shuns contention, though he will  
hazard an opinion : from one who wishes to  
preserve consistency, but who would preserve  
consistency by varying his means to secure the  
unity of his end ; and, when the equipoise of  
the vessel in which he sails may be endangered  
by overloading it upon one side, is desirous of  
IO carrying the small weight of his reasons to  
that which may preserve its equipoise

## NOTES.

The REFLECTIONS may be divided into three approximately equal parts of which the first includes paragraphs 1-148. This part discusses principles, while the second handles established institutions, and the third discusses the new constitution and administration in France. The first may be analysed thus:

1-22. Introductory: setting forth the occasion, and describing the Revolution Society.

23-55. On the Revolution of 1688-89; in three sections.

56-76. The different result in France; to be attributed to the composition and numbers of the Third Estate; two sections.

77-97. On Representation and the Rights of Man and on Government; two sections.

98-135. Effects on Character: illustrated in the treatment of the king and queen; with a view of the sources of Manners and Morals.

136-148. The attitude of Englishmen and the fundamental importance of Religion. This section concludes the first part and suggests the second.

The Preface refers to the circumstances under which Burke's *Reflections* were written. The book appeared in Nov. 1790 but one year before that date *i.e.*, in Oct. 1789 an earlier Letter was written which was kept back for a time, while events were under observation, but was finally transmitted before the end of 1789. About the date of its transmission Burke began this new letter known as the *Reflections*. He had hoped to finish it early in the spring, *i.e.*, about Mar. 1790. But the subject grew in his mind. Discussions in Parliament and breaches of friendship took place in February. The French Revolution continued to develop in startling forms. Burke resolved to make his letter a political manifesto designed to arrest revolutionary movements in France and revolutionary ideas in England. Morley

says, "Burke revised, erased, moderated, strengthened, emphasised, wrote and rewrote with indefatigable industry." The work was in hand for almost a year, and then in Nov. 1790 it appeared a small octavo of 356 pages which within the next year reached an eleventh edition.

Page 2. Para. I. *The occasion, and the sole responsibility of the author.*

14. **again.** *I.e.*, notwithstanding the receipt of a short letter giving reasons for hesitation and delay.

**of too little consequence.** Burke affects a modesty and indifference which are not quite sincere.

21. **to you.** The letter might injure the recipient by placing him in apparent opposition to popular movements.

26. **any description of men.** The reference is to political parties. Burke writes as an individual observer and not as a leader of the Whigs. Hitherto he has written and acted as one of a body of men holding certain common principles and aims. Now he dissociates himself from his former friends.

Para. 2. 32. **spirit of rational liberty.** This phrase strikes a key-note at the beginning. 'Liberty' is a very various and variable thing and all its manifestations must, in Burke's opinion, be brought to the tests of reason and utility. Note also in connection with spirit the terms 'body' and 'organ.'

The preceding long letter to which Burke here refers commends liberty thus qualified: "The liberty I mean is *social* freedom. It is the state of things in which liberty is secured by equality of restraint. This kind of liberty indeed is but another name for justice. Whenever a separation is made between liberty and justice neither is in my opinion safe."

34. **a permanent body.** The Legislature; in England the Houses of Parliament. In the fundamental parts of the Constitution there must be elements of permanence to hold in check waves of excitement or vagaries of opinion.

35. **effectual organ.** Effective instrument; as the hand is a part of the body and an organ of the mind. The reference is to the Executive Government, including the Cabinet (or Ministry) which has responsible charge of all administration.

37. **material.** Important containing much matter.

Para. 3. 41. **certain proceedings.** The reference is to events of 1789 after the meeting of the States-General (5th May). Amongst the events of the summer and autumn were the formation of the National Assembly, 17th June, the Fall of the

Bastille, 14th July, the abolition of feudal orders, 4th Aug., with the Declaration of the Rights of Man, 27th Aug., the transference of the King and the Assembly from Versailles to Paris, Oct. 6th, the design of a new Constitution with a single Assembly, and the proceeding to raise money by confiscating Church property.

**Page 3. 2. two clubs.** Political clubs have been numerous in England for over two hundred years. Some are head-quarters of party organisation; some are mainly social; others are obscure and unimportant. The Constitutional Society (or Society for Constitutional Information) was an obscure body which had been formed in 1780 to aid the movement then going on in behalf of parliamentary Reform. Its chief work consisted in disseminating political tracts. The Revolution Society was an older club which met annually on the 4th November to commemorate the Revolution of 1688. In the eighteenth century the name Revolution recalled the "happy and glorious" events of 1688-89 and did not suggest violence.

**Para. 4. 6. the constitution of this kingdom.** The system of government by King, Lords and Commons. In the constitution as fixed in 1689 it was long believed that the parts were perfectly balanced. The King retained the dignity of his office and nominated the ministers, while the ministers by being made responsible obtained the actual power. The Lords and Commons were able to check each other as no new bill could pass into law without the sanction of both, and both could be checked by the king's negative. The Commons as the representatives of the people voted the annual taxation which the Lords simply confirmed. The Lords had the supreme judicial power, but the Ministry represented the opinions of the majority of the Commons who by renewed elections were kept in closer touch with the country.

**7. principles of the glorious revolution.** The principles embodied in the Declaration of Right and Bill of Rights. These asserted the ancient rights of the Commons and determined the constitution as that of a Limited or Constitutional Monarchy. 'Glorious' was a familiar epithet, due to the fact that the Revolution was wrought peaceably.

**14. Those who cultivate . . .** Burke considers himself the true exponent of these principles but in fact now after 100 years a point of time was reached at which in the light of new conditions and new developments these principles were capable of divergent interpretations. Thus Burke separated himself from Fox and Sheridan, and their party he styled New Whigs. This new development he deemed highly dangerous.

**23. presides in the other.** Lives and rules in the Constitution.

Para. 5. *The Constitutional Club and its efforts to circulate poor books.*

35. **Seven or eight years.** It was founded in 1780.

36. **charitable.** Written with a touch of irony and contempt.

Page 4. 3. **charitably read.** This implies that Burke had no sympathy with the publications. About 1780 when all felt that public affairs had been mismanaged movements were set on foot for a reform of the House of Commons such as was carried out in 1832 and in subsequent Reform bills. Burke opposed this movement and endeavoured to meet the evils by a plan for Economical Reform.

5. **like goods.** . . . A scornful comparison to the purchase in France of inferior articles of manufacture that were despised in England.

Para. 6. 18. **National Assembly.** The name then given in France to its Parliament. The arrangement of the Three Estates broke down from the beginning; and the Third Estate (the Commons) with the members that joined them from the other two Estates (the Nobility and the Clergy) were constituted one body under the title of the National Assembly, June 1789.

20. **you reserved** . . . This is banter or chaff.

24. **in equity.** In natural fairness. Sarcastic.

30. **adopting.** Because they gratefully welcomed the deputation and the address.

31. **committee.** The term is often used vaguely of a self-constituted body of workers for any end.

33. **Henceforward** . . . A continuance of the style of mockery and irony. Burke's pamphlets are written speeches with elements of argument, declamation and invective.

34, 36. **privileged persons, diplomatic body.** This mock-heroic description is founded on the fact that they have been publicly recognised by the French Assembly. It is contrary to all right practice for a Parliament or a governing body to enter into correspondence with unofficial and irresponsible foreigners. International negotiations are conducted by diplomatists; and every country has at foreign courts a legation or diplomatic body (ambassador, consul, &c.) through which it communicates with or receives communications from the foreign power. Ambassadors and their staffs are privileged persons whose persons are by immemorial law inviolable. Burke is ridiculing both the presumption of the Revolution Society and the folly of the French Assembly.

**37. splendour to obscurity and . . .** An example of the balanced and pompous style of the latter half of the eighteenth century. **Distinction** is the quality of being distinguished.

**Page 5. 2. anniversary.** William III landed on the 4th Nov. 1688 and this date was considered the most suitable for the marking of the Revolution. But on 4th Nov. 1788 the anniversary was the centenary; and that occasioned an increased attention to the Society and the principles it commemorated.

**3. dissenters.** A term of reproach applied to the Christian bodies who declined to accept the constitution of the Church of England as determined and established in the reign of Charles II. The more usual word is Nonconformist because separation dates from the Conformity Act of 1662.

**4. denomination.** Nonconformists include several denominations or classes, such as Congregationalists, Baptists, Roman Catholics. Price was a Unitarian.

**8. at the tavern.** A tavern is a Hotel or coffee-house or restaurant. The club had not a building of its own. Accordingly after a Discourse in a Church the wealthier members would dine together in a Hotel and conclude with the usual toasts.

**9. public measure.** Bill before Parliament or the country, or other public proposal. A bill passed is an Act.

**political system.** Questions of limited or unlimited monarchy, aristocracy or democracy, &c.

**much less . . .** Introducing something much more inappropriate. To pass formal resolutions regarding the constitution of a foreign country was highly unusual.

**Para. 7. *The entrance of new parties and consequent schemes.***

**22. truly Christian politicians.** The language is again ironical. The reference is to wire-pullers or secret instigators. The word ‘politicians’ suggests schemers; ‘Christian’ refers to the injunction of Christ: “let not your left hand know what your right hand doeth.” *Matthew VI., 3.* ‘Pious’ is ironical.

The suggestion of ‘new members’ is partially correct, as the Society had just been reorganised with a view to more active sympathy with the advanced opinions set forth in France.

**Para. 8. 32. take my full share.** The right of private or literary criticism is here asserted but carefully distinguished from the right to address a foreign government or legislature. Burke is perhaps thinking of some of the classical statements of this natural right; as the verse in Terence—I am a man, there is nothing human that I reckon alien to me—or the verse which was the motto of the *Spectator* claiming concern in whatever men do.

36. **public stage.** Metaphorical description of public or national life.

37. **republic.** Not in the technical sense, but in the general sense of the commonwealth or national life of a country. As yet France was a monarchy.

38. **general apostolical mission.** As of one divinely commissioned to address all nations. 'General' is opposed to 'particular' in next clause.

41. **its public will.** Its will as expressed in Acts of Parliament and in established custom and practice. Burke recognises himself as a portion of the Society which constitutes his own country and considers that it would be improper for him to act independently towards a foreign country.

Page 6. 3. **express authority.** Authority directly expressed or assigned in a particular case. Government may at any time despatch a special agent on some definite commission.

Para. 9. *The mode of action seems not quite straightforward.*

8. **equivocal.** Capable of diverse interpretation and therefore ready to mislead; ambiguous and possibly deceitful.

II. **corporate.** Embodied and representative. A body corporate is a company of persons authorised to act as one body or a unity; e.g., a Municipal Corporation. The French not knowing the usages, or the freedom exercised in England, might imagine that a Society approaching them with signatures of noblemen was a national institution established or acknowledged by law.

14. **the ambiguity . . .** The title of the Society or body might mislead.

19. **petition.** Until recently it was a practice to present petitions to the House of Commons in order to show that the country was in favour of particular measures. But no petition was allowed unless it clearly indicated who its signatories were.

21. **you have thrown . . .** The National Assembly have without investigation welcomed the resolution of this obscure club as cordially as though it represented the entire country. The "presence chamber" is an idea transferred from the palace to the hall of State.

26. **representative majesty.** A characteristic phrase showing Burke's sense of the mysterious unity and greatness of a people. See below. 'Majesty' is the term specially used of the sovereign; and here of the people conceived as sovereign.

32. **vote and resolution.** The importance of a resolution voted depends not on its accuracy but on the number and weight of the

persons whose opinion it records. It possesses the Authority due to them.

36. **instrument.** In Law the term is used for a writing or document setting forth what has been agreed on.

41. **lead.** Guiding influence. With the whole clause compare below, "men of light and leading."

Page 7. 2-3. **refined, ingenious.** The terms suggest subtlety, cunning, cleverness, as distinguished from the plain blunt honesty which Burke affects for himself.

10. **complexion** With something of the older meaning constitution, character; or perhaps, look, aspect. In modern English the term is used mainly of the colour of the skin.

Para 10. *Burke's political principles.*

II. **manly, moral, regulated.** Descriptions of true liberty, with which is to be taken 'rational' used above. Manly may be opposed to sentimental and to servile, moral to what is evil in principle or in effect, regulated to what is impulsive or reckless or regardless of law. All kinds of liberty should accord with reason and conscience and the forms of orderly life and government.

14. **as good proof.** Burke doubtless considered that his whole life was spent in the service of liberty. Witness in particular his opposition to the personal government of the King and the King's friends, his defence of the American colonists, and his impeachment of Hastings.

21. **stripped of every relation.** Mentally considered, without reference to conditions or environment or effect. Relation or relativity is one of the ten categories of the Aristotelian Logic. See below.

22. **of metaphysical abstraction.** This clause has the same meaning as the preceding. Metaphysical in Burke means abstract, theoretic. The term was undefined and Johnson used it of a school of literature which aimed at far-fetched and unexpected wit. Burke was perhaps thinking of Aristotelian usage, and of the habit of separating in thought what cannot be separated in reality. The next sentence makes his meaning clear.

23. **circumstances.** The sentence expresses one of the fundamental points in Burke's political teaching. Political ideas and principles are to be judged in their application. Circumstances are literally, surrounding things, and include conditions of time and place and number and rank and everything else that pertains to practical life. They include the historical situation, the culture, the temper and peculiarities, the class relationships and all other determining factors in the life of a people. It depends on these whether any system of government is beneficial or otherwise,

**25. distinguishing colour.** Special merit or demerit. The various forms and degrees of utility or non-utility are compared to various colours which may be bright or dull, attractive or indifferent. Principles entering into complex human life take form and aspect from the *media* through which they pass.

**26. discriminating effect.** The effect or result by which one principle may be discriminated from another and by which its value may be estimated.

**27. civil and political scheme.** Scheme affecting the government and public life of a people. The epithets 'civil' and 'political' are virtually synonymous, being derived from the Latin and Greek respectively; but in practice civil is generally used in opposition to military, and political of the questions pertaining to legislation or to matters of law and administration that have controversial or international aspects. In the last part of the book Burke, referring to the Executive, uses civil of what pertains to the judicature and political of the carrying out of the Assembly's orders.

**29. Abstractedly.** In the abstract, and without reference to any actual facts or situations.

**31. felicitated.** Congratulated.

**32. (for she. . . .** This parenthesis is intended to insinuate that now there is nothing in France but anarchy.

**34. what the nature of . . . or how . . .** These two points, the form of government and the manner or capacity of administration, indicate the main questions that one must ask before determining whether any particular government is good for the country it exists in or not.

**35. can I now . . . ?** Similarly there are fundamental questions that must be asked before the liberty enjoyed by any people can be approved.

**39. a madman who.** An extreme instance, given to show that liberty may be an injurious thing.

**Page 8. 2. highwayman.** Robber: another example.

**4. recovery of his natural rights.** This phrase is used because it indicates what the French think they have obtained. Natural rights are either the abstract ideal "rights of man" based on speculation, or the rights or the state of nature which existed before the days of civilisation,—expressed by Wordsworth in the lines,

That they should take who have the power  
And they should keep who can.

The question is discussed farther on.

5. **act over again.** Give another exhibition or representation of. The language of the stage is used for greater point and emphasis.

6. **galleys.** Or galleys. Vessels of a low flat description once used in the Mediterranean and navigated with oars which were worked by convicts.

7. **the metaphysic Knight.** Don Quixote, from whom comes the epithet quixotic. *Don Quixote* is a Spanish romance written by Cervantes (1547-1616) and is one of the best known books of the world. The chivalrous and eccentric knight brooded over the world's wrongs and constituted himself a champion of the oppressed. On the occasion referred to in the text he delivered the criminals from prison after which they turned against himself. This Knight is called 'metaphysic' not that he was philosophical but because he believed in abstract natural rights and formed his opinions without reference to practice.

*Para. II. How Liberty is to be judged.*

9. **in action.** In active movement amongst men, operating in actual life. Cf. "broke loose."

10. **strong principle.** The emphasis is on the adjective. Liberty is a force, but its moral qualities cannot be at once determined.

12. **wild gas, fixed air.** The comparison is with carbonic acid gas of which the properties had been ascertained in the eighteenth century. It is a compound of carbon and oxygen and was called fixed because it could be deprived of elasticity and fixed in certain substances. Similarly liberty which in its natural idea is elastic and volatile requires to be fixed by absorption or incorporation into government. It then acts by law.

14. **until the first effervescence. . . .** Carbonic acid is one of the gases used in the manufacture of aerated waters. The state of a person or community suddenly set at a liberty is compared to a newly-opened bottle of lemonade. Some time must elapse before the liquor can be rightly judged.

20. **flattery corrupts.** With the form of this maxim compare Shakespeare on Mercy: it blesseth him that gives and him that takes.

21. **adulation.** A synonym of flattery, but used of greater occasions as when kings or kingdoms are addressed.

24. **how it had been combined. . . .** The metaphor from Chemistry is perhaps intended to be maintained. The eight elements that follow are a summary of the essentials of a prosperous country. They afford tests of the value of a country's liberties.

25. **government.** The proper management of a State in all its public affairs and regulations; the opposite of anarchy.

26. **public force.** A nation's power of acting with effect; as in suppressing disorder at home or exercising influence abroad.

27. **armies; revenue.** The two subjects are discussed in the last part of the book.

29. **solidity of property.** Solidity expresses the ideas of security, stability, firmness, being opposed to what is fluctuating and uncertain. English conservatism has always attached an exaggerated importance to the idea of property. It is regarded as sacred and inviolable. Cf. below, "too much and too little are treason against property."

30. **civil and social manners.** The graces and refinements of life. Cf. what is said below on the ancient chivalry.

34. **The effect of liberty . . .** This sentence is of the nature of a popular definition. The play on "please" is epigrammatic.

38. **Prudence.** Here, natural common sense.

39. **separate . . .** Such as the madman or the criminal. **insulated** and **insular** are from Lat. *Insula* an island.

40. **but liberty when men act in bodies is power.** This involves greater danger than the liberty of individuals. Combination multiplies power, and power may be used for good or for evil.

41. **declare themselves.** Publicly take a side or give forth an opinion.

Page 9. 3. **new power in new persons.** In such cases the danger is increased manifold. New power may be dangerous even in the trained and experienced, but in the inexperienced it is alarming. New person, or *novus homo*, was the expression used in Rome of one who rose from humble birth to a position among the aristocracy.

4. **principles, tempers, dispositions.** These are what actuate men. Principles refers to opinions and theories; tempers to excitability in respect of anger and kindred passions; dispositions to more permanent elements of character such as loyalty or envy or ambition.

7. **real movers.** Behind all revolutionary movements are secret agencies or instigators working usually for ends of their own. The more prominent actors may be mere puppets.

Para 12. *The dangers of England.*

9. **transcendental dignity.** A scornful description of high pretensions.

10. **in the country.** Out of town. Burke possessed the estate of Beaconsfield in Buckinghamshire, twenty miles from London. Here he lived when Parliament was not sitting.

14-15. **an account . . . containing.** The little volume contained besides the sermon preached by Dr. Price on 4th Nov. 1789 an appendix giving information regarding France. The third edition contained a letter to Dr. Price from the Duke de Rochefoucault and also a letter to the President of the Society (Lord Stanhope) from the archbishop of Aix who was President of the National Assembly.

19. **manifest design of . . .** The Revolution Society wished to utilise the events in France for the purpose of promoting radicalism in England. The doctrines preached by Price were equally applicable to both countries. This intensified Burke's indignation.

22. **conduct of the National Assembly.** The Assembly was formed between the 17th and 27th June 1789, the separate orders of the nobility and clergy then ceasing to exist. Burke is here referring chiefly to the events of the second half of 1789. Amongst the things he most strongly disapproved were the new principles of equality abolishing rank, the lowering of the Executive, the spoliation and new constitution of the Church, the overawing of the king and court, and the licence used and tolerated in the army. These, he thought, with the prevailing violence and uncertainty were destroying France.

26. **form of the Constitution.** The National Assembly were almost from the beginning occupied with this question. What was clear to Burke was that there was to be, in addition to uncontrolled local governments, one supreme assembly (without a second or revising chamber) and that the complicated methods of electing it were unwise. Another error was that the Ministers were excluded from it.

27. **future polity.** The system of government to be maintained in the future. Polity (Gr. *politeia*) contains the general principles and forms on which policy depends.

31. **prudence of reserve. . . .** Note the distinction between the requirements of ordinary life and of great emergencies.

37. **infancy.** Beginning.

**by moments.** Perhaps the reference is to the momentum of a moving body which in a downward descent is constantly increasing. In France events have moved very rapidly.

39. **wage war with Heaven.** A reference to the Story of Greek mythology according to which the Titans heaped mountain upon mountain (Pelion on Ossa) in the hope of attacking Jupiter in his Olympian abode. The Revolutionists are not restrained by any code human or divine.

41. **Engines.** Fire-engines for extinguishing or preventing fire by water. Metaphoric expression of a maxim of prudence.

42. **Better to be.** . . . The sentence is elliptical and aphoristic, and in the balanced style then approved. **Apprehensions** are fears, and **security** is the absence of fear or anxiety (Lat. *se, cura*).

Para. I3. *Burke's literary intention: the abnormal occasion.*

Page 10. 3. **Solicitous chiefly.** . . . The first half of this paragraph sets forth Burke's plan of the *Reflections*.

27. **I shall still keep.** . . . I shall adhere to the form of a letter though my object is general.

12. **very little attention to formal method.** Burke wrote the book, especially the first half of it, with very great care and although the method is not formal (as in a systematic treatise or expository work) it afforded advantages in respect of freedom and vividness.

13. **I set out with.** This first part is simply introductory.

17. **crisis.** Turning point; originally a medical term.

7. **chaos.** Confusion without any regular aim or plan.

30. **tragi-comic scene.** The English drama has many tragi-comic scenes, and also tragi-comic plays called tragi-comedies. In these tragic and comic elements are combined; but the result is not ludicrous and monstrous as in France.

**laughter and tears.** Corresponding to the follies and crimes.

**scorn and horror.** Evoked by the levity and ferocity. Burke was a careful student of the drama and of his friend Garrick the great actor.

Para. I4. *Contrary and surprising opinions.*

39. **exultation** Joyous triumph. The paragraph from this term onward is intended to convey scorn by the language of irony. Burke is however not skilful in pointed wit and keen invective. He wields too large a weapon.

Page II. I. **exertion of freedom.** The language is properly applicable to action rendered necessary in the circumstances.

3. **secular applause.** Opposed to sacred eloquence and referring to speeches of politicians.

4. **dashing Machiavelian politicians.** 'Dashing' is the epithet of a gay and bold adventurer; 'Machiavelian' is the standing political term for unprincipled, or reckless action in regard of the means by which an end is attained; 'politicians' has something

of its old meaning of schemers or intriguers. Machiavell (about 1469 to 1527), a Florentine, was a distinguished statesman. His chief book *The Prince* (1516) is full of the maxims and sinister devices by which a sovereign may secure the control of his subjects. Burke may be referring to some of the Whig statesmen in England such as Lord Stanhope or even his former ally Sheridan with whom he openly broke in Feb. 1790.

5. **devout effusions.** Referring to Price's sermon. Ironical.

Para. 15. *Circumstances recalled: the sermon and the subsequent action.*

9. **of eminence.** Price was well known as a writer on ethics and on subjects allied to politics. He was a friend of Shelburne and of Pitt with both of whom Burke had quarrelled, and he was a chief adviser of Pitt in the financial measures adopted in 1784 and subsequent years.

10. **Old Jewry.** The Church, so-named from the street or district in which it is situated. Burke in the meanness of his anger calls the Church a meeting-house thereby expressing contempt for those who were outside the established church.

15. **porridge.** Mixture, an attempt at humour.

17. **cauldron.** The large boiler in which the various ingredients are wrought into one substance, perhaps a reference to the vessels of sorcerers, and in particular to the witches' cauldron in Macbeth.

21. **corollary.** Necessary consequence. Used in Geometry of an additional result following from the main proposition, and here indicating that the address voted is a natural outcome of the sermon preached.

26. **expressed or implied.** Either directly or indirectly. Burke probably means any qualification of the Sermon. Persons accepting the address might have indicated that they did not agree with Price's interpretation of the English constitution. It is this that in the first instance Burke is to deal with.

Para. 16. 32. **public declaration.** A sort of manifesto.

33. **literary caballers, intriguing philosophers.** These phrases describe two classes, one mainly literary the other more philosophical, both of whom are accused of political intrigue. The application in France is obvious as the revolution was prepared for by the writings of literary men such as Voltaire and Rousseau and of philosophical writers such as Diderot, D'Alembert and Helvetius. In England there were political philosophers such as Priestley and Bentham, and on the same side some literary men and journalists now virtually forgotten. With these of both kinds Burke classes Price.

**34-35. political theologians and theological politicians.** The former phrase refers to clergymen who are here called theologians from their profession rather than their writings, the latter to laymen who seek to find in religious doctrine a basis for their political theories.

**36. a sort of oracle.** A great authority. Properly an oracle is the utterance of a god, or the god himself, or the place of consultation. Price is to his admirers as the oracle which they consulted at Delphi was to the Greeks.

**38. philippizes.** Answers as they wish; expounds in accordance with their opinions and humours and designs. For this reason it is that Price is held in so high esteem amongst them. This use of the term is derived from an observation of Demosthenes that the Greek oracle *philippized*, i.e., gave answers suitable to the designs of Philip, and was therefore to be suspected as under his influence.

**39. chants his prophetic song.** Utterances of prophecy were chanted in verse. The words are metaphorically and mockingly used of Price.

**Para. I7. A historic precedent.**

Page 12. 7. **St. James'.** Called below the royal chapel at Whitehall (Westminster); attached to the royal residence.

**8. the saints.** Some sections of the Puritans believed in a speedy fulfilment of prophecies and arrogated to themselves scriptural language describing the authority to be entrusted to the saints. Peters' quotation is from Psalm I49.

**I5. your league.** The Holy League formed in 1576 and headed by the Duke of Guise which for several years played a malignant part in French history. The object was to frustrate Protestantism in general and in particular to secure the accession of Catholic kings—Henry of Navarre (afterwards Henry IV) being at that time in sympathy with the Protestants.

**I6. our solemn league.** A covenant entered into between England and Scotland in favour of Presbyterianism; accepted in Scotland 1638 and by the English Parliament 1643. This sentence illustrates the freedom of the epistolary manner; it also shows in this last reference how alien the mind of Burke was to ordinary English liberalism. While he accepted the revolution of 1689 he hated the record of the Parliamentary party in the reign of Charles I.

**21. politics and the pulpit.** This contrast is a commonplace, but the truth of Burke's proposition depends on the nature of the politics. It may be the duty of the pulpit (*i. e.* of the preacher) to inculcate righteousness in public life. Lat. *pulpitum* a scaffold or desk,

24. **healing voice of Christian charity.** This fine phrase may be interpreted in many ways. Men should be taught in church to love one another and to judge each other generously ; they should also find soothing and comfort amid the distractions of life.

27. **confusion of duties.** The spheres of religion and politics are distinct and should not be blended. The mingling injures both. So Bacon often complained of wrong combinations.

**Those who quit.** . . . The persons that make such confusion are usually inexperienced.

30. **the character they leave.** Christian duty.

31. **the character they assume.** Statesmanship.

32. **the world.** Mankind, and the social and political organisations.

35. **nothing of politics but.** No real knowledge of political laws, principles and relations. Political wisdom requires freedom from political passion or partizanship.

37. **one day's truce.** One day in seven (Sunday).

38. **dissensions and animosities.** These indicate the passions roused by politics. The former refers to difference of opinion, the latter to moral antagonism.

Page 13. Para 18. 2. **change this; danger equally.** Burke means that the particular part ridiculed in the rest of this paragraph is not very dangerous.

4. **reverend lay-divine.** The Duke of Grafton who was Chancellor of Cambridge University (see Gray's Installation Ode). He is called a lay-divine because though a layman he was the author of a theological book. Reverend, *i.e.*, worthy of reverence, is used ironically. The term was usually applied only to clergymen ; and now to them exclusively.

6. **of rank and literature.** Of high rank and learning. The hint is told in next sentence.

8. **Seekers.** Inquirers after truth. The term is put in italics because it is not original but had been in frequent use and in particular it designated a sect of Puritans in the time of the Commonwealth. **Noble,** means belonging to the peerage.

10. **old staple of the national church.** Staple is the principal commodity of a place, and the national church is here so called as it is the largest and most fully equipped of the churches and therefore the chief religious body. The 'national church' is the Established Church, what is called the Church of England. The epithet 'national' is claimed because it is upheld and endowed by the State.

II. **well-assorted warehouses.** Keeping up the metaphor introduced by staple. In these 'warehouses' other manufactures can be obtained; that is to say, other types of Christianity.

13. **improve upon.** Out-do. This is the hint. The sentences that follow are of the nature of caricature.

27. **rational and manly.** These epithets previously applied to liberty are here quoted from Price who uses them of worship. The point emphasised is independent judgment.

32. **non-descripts.** Objects not yet classed. The metaphor here is from Botany. Dissent is compared to a dry (or dried) garden (*hortus siccus*) in which are various kinds and specimens, known or unknown.

Page 14. 4. **diversify the amusements.** Burke supposes that the town (*i.e.*, London) would find a new amusement in the attempts of lords to preach, but the wit is unworthy of a great writer.

6. **uniform round.** The same succession (of shows, theatres, concerts, &c., &c.).

7. **vapid.** Spiritless, uninspiring.

8. **Mess-Johns.** A slang term for clergymen, Mess- being contracted from *magister*, master.

9. **coronets.** The mark of nobility: dimin. of crown. Burke ludicrously supposes that the lords would wear in the pulpit the insignia of their social rank.

10. **democratic and levelling.** As used here the terms are virtually synonymous. Levelling was a word of the seventeenth century. The term democratic has now a higher meaning. In the text the doctrines of equality are referred to.

12. **evangelists.** Preachers of an evangel or gospel.

**disappoint.** These noblemen will not prove so aggressive as is desired.

15. **polemic divines.** Polemic is literally making war, and in the text 'literally' refers to actual warfare such as took place in the reign of Charles I. Figuratively Burke must mean controversialists, men prone to disputation; which however is the ordinary meaning.

**so to drill . . .** A reminiscence of aspects of the Civil War.

20. **compulsory freedom.** An oxymoron ridiculing the intolerance of these levellers who wish to assert by force their ideas of freedom. The supposition is that if they were literally polemic

they would compel the prevalence of varieties of rational religion; but the words are almost meaningless.

21. **not be equally conducive.** The new evangel would not be accepted, even if supported by force, and disturbances would follow.

23. **restrictions.** The bounds in their levelling principles, that is, their not fighting or drilling congregations for war. The sentence illustrates Burke's laborious and unsuccessful style of wit. The **despotism** is what is supposed to be exercised by himself in imposing the restrictions.

In para. 13 Burke stated that he would first handle the contentions of the Revolution Society. The main question of difference is the interpretation of the Revolution of 1688; and to this he now comes, treating it in paragraphs 19-53. Other aspects of Price's sermon are dealt with more incidentally. It is Burke's manner to approach his various points gradually and circuitously. Hence his first important point is reached only in para. 22, where however the three aspects of the Revolution to be discussed are expressly stated. In paragraphs 19-21 he deals with the more abstract assertion that a truly legal monarchy must rest on national choice, and suggests that the application to England will be made at the suitable time. This discussion brings him to the historic facts of the Revolution.

Para. 19. *A vital question regarding the right of the Monarchy to exist.*

26. **utinam.** Would that to trifles he had given all these times of savagery. JUVENAL, Fourth Satire, referring to the Emperor Domitian.

28. **fulminating bull.** Thundering edict. The term bull (from Lat. *bulla* a leaden seal) is used only of papal decrees, having been originally used of the pope's seal attached to these rescripts. Burke compares Price to a pope of medieval times; cf. arch pontiff.

30. **its vital parts.** Its very heart; its most essential part.

32. "is almost the only. . . ." This sentence is doubly offensive to Burke because it not only disqualifies foreign kings but it puts the English throne on an unreal and therefore uncertain basis. If it is once admitted the argument can at convenience be turned against the English crown. See the first of the three points to be discussed.

36. **rights of men.** One of the watchwords of the Revolution.

37. **plenitude.** Fulness. The middle of this sentence is a good example of Burke's sweeping and majestic rhetoric. It shows how the rhetorical imagination can dignify dry argument.

**38. papal disposing power.** The claim of the Popes to be able to depose sovereigns, which was repeatedly exercised in the Middle Ages. This they could carry out because an excommunicated sovereign was considered by his people unfit to reign.

**39. meridian fervour.** Noonday heat; metaphorically used of the time when the power was at its maximum strength. Burke fixes the period as the twelfth century when Innocent III (1198-1216) exercised the right to excommunicate and therefore to depose Kings and Emperors. He excommunicated King John and the Emperor Otho. In the preceding century the extreme doctrine was asserted by Hildebrand, known as Gregory VII.

**40-41. ban and anathema.** Prohibition and curse.

**usurpers.** Not lawful sovereigns.

**42. by circles of . . .** By geographical measurements (and not on moral or political grounds). The circles are those marked on a globe or map. Longitude is the distance east or west, latitude the distance north or south, of the equator. This mode of description is meant to emphasise the presumption and absurdity of Price's doctrine.

**Page 15. 2-3. these apostolic missionaries.** Used like evangelists above, but with more pointed irony, as Price's methods are very unapostolic.

**4. this concern.** The concern or duty of the kings [of the world].

**5. as a domestic.** As a home (or English) question of some importance.

**6. solidity.** Validity. "Only" refers to popular choice.

**Para. 20. A mischievous doctrine to be in due time applied.**

**II. either is nonsense. . .** The words may be regarded as meaningless absurdity but if they are taken seriously they are highly dangerous. Inasmuch as the qualification (that the English king reigns by the choice of his people) is untrue it follows that he too is a usurper.

**27. The policy of. . .** The ultimate design or the aim in view, and also the means of reaching it.

**29. Propagators.** Another term used of religious teachers.

**30. their abstract principle. . .** The principle stated in the words within brackets is called abstract (*i. e.*, theoretical) because it is not asserted in any particular case or as challenging the rights of any individual king. It is a mere intellectual thesis.

31. **popular choice.** Choice by the people (not necessarily popular in the modern sense).

32. **sovereign magistracy...** Office of king. Magistracy was used in Latin of all offices of Government.

30. **overlooked.** Not discussed at present.

34. **In the mean time.** . . . But gradually it would come to be considered an undisputed truth.

38. **Pickled.** The reference is to a mode of preserving food either in salt water or in vinegar. The eloquence serves the purpose of the vinegar or other juice in preserving the principle for future use.

40. **Condo.** . . . I carefully lay up what by and bye I shall be able to make use of. HORACE, *Epistles*, I., i. 12.

Page 16. 3. **so far as opinion is security.** Opinion means general acceptance, prevalence of a particular mode of thought; hence recognition, reputation &c.

Para. 21. *Subterfuges. The actual law and covenant.*

8. **direct tendency.** The effect towards which they are working and which they are calculated ultimately to produce.

9-10. **equivocations and slippery constructions.** Ambiguities and changing or changeable expositions.

13. **they will perhaps tell us.** An example of the equivocation or slippery construction.

18. **subterfuge.** A still more contemptuous term indicating that they evade the natural meaning of their words.

20. **Safe.** Against examination or refutation.

**nugatory.** Of no importance (and therefore not worth answering).

**They are welcome to.** . . . No one will care to pursue when they take up this foolish position.

22. **For if.** . . . This question and the following one imply that this new position is of no value either against or in behalf of the present dynasty.

26. **Brunswick line.** The present line of sovereigns dating from George I. George through his mother Sophia was descended from Elizabeth daughter of James I. who married the king of Bohemia. Her daughter Sophia married in 1658 Duke Ernest Augustus, a younger son of the House of Brunswick-Lüneburg and was the mother of George I.

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**30. beginners. Founders.**

**chosen by those.** . . . Burke here admits what was a general assumption of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but which is unhistorical.

**33. Kingdoms. Kingships.**

**34. elective.** Determined, on the death or resignation of a sovereign, by election from some limited circle of choice.

**40. by a fixed rule of succession.** *I.e.*, by the succession of the nearest heir being Protestant, as defined and fixed by the Act of Settlement.

**according to the laws.** The express laws are the Bill of Rights (1689) and the Act of Settlement (1701). Burke might perhaps add unwritten laws which forbid Parliament or the country from tampering with that Settlement except in grave emergency. In any case the phrase "according to the laws" guards against the reference that the King rules **by virtue of the laws**.

**41. legal conditions.** These are, Protestantism and adherence to the principles of the Constitution as set forth in the Declaration of Right.

**42. compact.** A definite "compact" was made when William and Mary accepted and sanctioned the Bill of Rights. The term "compact" was more frequently used of imaginary agreements in the dawn of history. In this case it was between the sovereigns on the one hand and Parliament representing the nation on the other.

Page 17. 3. **not a single vote** . . . These remarks are themselves nugatory and are an instance of Burke's too frequent loss of dignity. He means the question was settled for ever.

**6-7. electoral college.** The technical description of a body of colleagues whose duty it is to elect some high functionary. A college is primarily a society or guild of colleagues in possession of equal privileges. Electoral has special reference to the electors who chose the Emperor of Germany. These were German princes numbering at first seven and finally nine, who from about the thirteenth century down to the close of the Empire in 1806 met to determine the succession (The old German empire established by Charlemagne in A. D. 800 represented the Roman empire of Western Europe; the present German empire dates from 1871).

**7. if things were ripe.** Burke is insinuating that Price and his friends are endeavouring to produce a situation in which the sovereign will be at their mercy.

Para. 22. *Their fundamental principle clear. Claims regarding the Revolution.*

13. **evasion.** The equivocation and subterfuge, above.

14. **error of fact.** Fact is in contrast with "the principle" mentioned below. An error of fact is an error in a historical statement.

22. **oblique.** Indirect.

23. **bottom.** Have their foundation and starting-point.

25. **exclusive legal title.** The choice of the people (as they maintain).

26. **mere rant of . . .** Mere vague flattering of the people.

27. **dogmatically.** In definite assertion laid down as certain doctrine.

30. **compose one system.** Make a harmonious whole.

35. **frame a government.** *I. e.*, a new kind of government, if we should wish.

36. **unheard-of bill of rights.** The phrase means that this is not only different from the actual Bill of Rights but is something monstrous.

Page 18. 5. **bound to do so by the laws.** Burke here calls up the mutual obligations of the compact; the undertaking of Parliament and people to support the throne.

8. **abuses its name.** By calling itself the Revolution Society.

What may be called the first chapter of the Reflections begins here. Burke's main object is to expound the Revolution of 1688 to a generation now far removed from the historic event. He does so by way of answering and refuting Price's misrepresentation. Price's statements reflect the ordinary radicalism of his day. No doubt in 1688 there were many, and in 1648 still more, who held opinions similar to those of Price. But the Revolution is to be judged not by such vague opinion but by the definite action and resolutions and enactments of the Parliament. There is always variety of opinion but there was at the time a definite and recorded policy to which, by an overwhelming majority, the nation agreed. Burke as a lawyer and statesman rightly brings the discussion to the point and test of what was enacted in the Bill of Rights

Para. 23. *The fundamental document.*

9. **These gentlemen. . .** Here begins the discussion of the first of the three claims.

**12. forty years before.** *I. e.*, the overthrow of Charles I. (beheaded 30 Jan. 1649). Burke widely separates the events of 1648-49 and of 1688-89, but the principles at stake, apart from James' catholicism, were virtually the same. Only in the former case the prolonged civil conflict brought the military element to the front. In the latter case the flight of the king made the solution easy.

**18. acts.** *I. e.*, Acts of Parliament; bills passed into law.

**21. statute called the. . .** A statute is a law enacted by the legislature. The Declaration of Right was not a statute, but subsequently it was passed into law under the title Bill of Rights. The written Law consists of statutes (or acts of Parliament) The term Bill in itself does not describe an act or law or statute but only a measure laid before the legislature for consideration with a view to enactment.

**24. great lawyers.** Macaulay mentions Holt, Treby, Maynard and Somers.

**great statesmen.** Viscount Halifax was one of the most prominent. The dominating Whig junto consisted of Somers, Montague (afterwards Earl of Halifax), Russell and Wharton.

**25. enthusiasts.** Fanatics. In the eighteenth century this term was used with contempt. The original Greek meaning was god-possessed.

**Para. 24. Importance and purpose of the Bill of Rights.**

**30-31. (the act of the 1st. . .** (The act of the 1st year of William and Mary, session second, chapter two). Burke means the Bill of Rights.

**33. reinforced, explained . . .** The words mean that the ancient constitution received new force and clearness and application and was finally fixed.

**34-35. It is called . . .** The full title is. This title shows the twofold object of the Act. The former aspect could not have been secured without the latter. The stability of the throne was essential for the maintenance of the principles of the Constitution. Had the Stuarts been able to return, the principles of the Bill of Rights would have been in immediate jeopardy. Accordingly the Bill is to be understood as enacting mutual obligation.

**Page 19. Para. 25. 3. Second opportunity.** Due to the prospect of a complete failure of heirs. The Bill of Rights settled the crown on the descendants of William and Mary, or of either by a second marriage, and thereafter on Anne the sister of Mary. Mary died, William did not remarry, and the succession passed to Anne. Her children proved delicate and it became necessary to provide for the possibility of this other

failure. Burke points out that Parliament did not search for an ideal prince but as a matter of course chose the nearest Protestant heir.

10. **legislature.** The two Houses of Parliament.

12. **legalizing the crown on.** Authorizing by law an election of the Sovereign on the basis of.

13. **spurious.** Opposed to genuine.

16. **with more precision.** That is, they named Sophia, Electress of Hanover.

18. **also . . . by the same policy.** The Act of Settlement, like the Bill of Rights and for the same reasons of safety, bound together our liberties and the fixed succession.

26. **certainty in the succession.** Because contested successions have been a main cause of wars and misery.

30. **oracles** Authoritative interpretations.

31. **gipsey predictions.** False oracles. The epithet seems due to the fact that gipsies are usually fortune-tellers.

33. **to a demonstration.** Completely.

35. **a case of necessity.** A very exceptional case in which something unusual was necessary.

**a rule of law.** A legal and regular practice. The phrases are skilfully balanced. Burke points out that the statesmen of the Revolution were confronted with an extreme emergency. The error of Price is in supposing that what had to be done in such a case constitutes a precedent for action when there is no such necessity. Burke is substantially right, and the words of Green (quoted in Dr. Selby's edition) are misleading. Yet it is well to remember that there is a precedent for emergencies.

Para. 26. *William's succession was a special case; rendered necessary.*

37. **in the person of.** William is here distinguished from Mary who was the elder daughter of James II. In his case there was a deviation in his obtaining precedence of Anne the younger daughter. By strict law (apart from the question of religion) the infant son of James' second marriage had the prior claim.

38. **temporary.** Because after William's death the succession reverted to the nearest Protestant heirs.

41. **jurisprudence.** The Science of Law, specially of the laws and customs of the State.

principle. What is everywhere applicable.

Page 20. I. law made in a special case and regarding . . . Burke makes it clear that he means not a typical but an exceptional case.

2. **Privilegium** . . . "A privilege does not pass over into a precedent." Here *privilegium* has its original meaning of a private or personal or exceptional law.

7. Its not being . . . In this and the following sentence Burke recalls that no one in 1689 made proposals that accord with the opinions of Price.

15. Prince of Orange. William's Dutch title.

18. undoubtedly his. A reference to a popular opinion that the infant child (afterwards known as James the Pretender) had been smuggled into the palace.

22. not properly a choice. Not a free choice but the only way out of the difficulty. William threatened to return to Holland and leave things in confusion if he were not made king.

23. in effect to. . . Here follow the alternatives.

25. in blood. Through the outbreak of war. Many would have fought for a republic rather than accept James again.

26. the peril. . . The peril produced by the illegal acts of James in his endeavours to promote Roman Catholicism.

27. act of necessity. Necessity is here used in direct negation of *choice*—the latter term being implied in Price's first proposition. Burke calls it a moral necessity; thereby distinguishing it from the usual philosophical use of the term. According to determinism or necessitarianism man is never free to choose, but acts under controlling motives. Burke plays with the terms in a different sphere of application.

Para. 27. 30. act. Enactment *viz.*, the Bill of Rights.

31. in a single case. In an individual, not a dynasty.

34. very near. William was a nephew of James II., being the son of his sister.

curious. Interesting.

35. Lord Somers. At that time John Somers (1652-1715) afterwards Attorney-general, and subsequently Lord Chancellor.

drew. The usual word is, drafted.

38. address. Skill, art.

39. solution of continuity. Discontinuity, breach of the regular succession.

41. **act of necessity.** Necessary action.

**countenance.** Favour, encourage.

Page. 21. 6. **ejaculation.** Expression of strong emotion. Acts of Parliament and legal documents do not usually contain expressions of feeling. In this case it is gratitude to God.

II. **their ancestors.** This phrase, which is correct, suggests regular hereditary succession.

14. **Act of Recognition.** Both in the case of Elizabeth (1558) and of James I. (1603) an Act of Recognition was at once passed because in both cases there was a possibility of opposition to the new sovereign. Both Acts naturally emphasized the right of the nearest heir. These Acts were, according to the manner of lawyers, studied in 1689 as precedents; and the same language was as far as possible repeated.

19. **precision.** Exactness. **literal.** To the letter.

21. **declaratory statutes.** When an Act of Parliament does not enact any new law but simply declares what is understood to be the existing law it is a declaratory statute. After the preamble an ordinary bill contains the words "be it enacted that," but this other kind substitutes for enacted 'declared', while some bills contain both terms.

Para. 28. *Further emphasis on the principle of inheritance.*

22. **The two houses.** . . . Burke continues to argue that nothing was done to suggest Price's interpretation of the event. The houses are the Lords and Commons.

30. **threw a politic well-wrought veil.** They carefully and prudently tried to conceal.

32. **meliorated.** Improved. The new order was preferable to the old both in respect of the kings and of the more definitely enacted laws.

34. **any future departure.** This is an extreme opinion. It is not probable that Somers and the others considered that the form of the constitution determined by them was final and perfect.

36. **relax the nerves.** Weaken the strength; the opposite of brace, or invigorate.

40. **Queen Mary.** The elder daughter of Henry VIII., who reigned 1553-58. The Act of recognition in her case was probably due to the fact that the legality of her parents' marriage had been disputed. Queen Elizabeth, also a daughter of Henry VIII., reigned from 1558 to 1603.

Page 22. 1. **vest.** Same<sup>1</sup> as invest, *i. e.*, clothe; “vest in”= confer upon, endow (their majesties) with.

3. **legal prerogatives.** Special rights, powers and privileges recognised by law. Thus it belongs to the royal prerogative to dissolve Parliament, or to reprieve a criminal.

4. **fully, rightfully . . . annexed.** This profuse repetition of terms nearly synonymous is characteristic of legal documents, being intended to prevent ambiguity.

7. **questions.** Disputes, uncertainties.

9. **traditional.** Traditional; *i. e.*, belonging to similar former occasions.

II. **as from a rubric.** As from a book of religious and sacred authority. The term rubric is ordinarily used of the Prayer-book which contains directions for public worship. The term is due to the fact that these directions are usually printed red (Lat. *ruber* red earth, *ruber* red). The term is also used in law-books of the titles of statutes (formerly printed red).

Para. 29. *Permanent acceptance of the dynasty.*

16. **doubtful title.** A title open to dispute or question and therefore uncertain. In such cases there would be more than one claimant, and the nation in deciding between claimants might be virtually exercising choice. Such a state of matters was regarded as an evil to be guarded against.

27. **pledge.** Chiefly the words “submit themselves, their heirs and posterities for ever,” in which the principle of hereditary succession is assumed as fundamental.

29. **renunciation.** By the words “limitation of the crown” they pledge themselves to the Protestant succession and renounce the right to accept a Roman Catholic, (such as other descendants of James II or Charles I might be).

31. **lords spiritual and temporal.** The technical description of the House of Lords, the former epithet being descriptive of the bishops. Temporal is equivalent to secular.

37. **the limitation.** The pledge includes the upholding of Protestantism.

Para. 30. 40. **so far . . .** This sentence reasserts the statement of the preceding paragraph more pointedly.

Page 23. 3. **abdicate.** Abandon; surrender. The term is usually followed by a concrete noun.

7. **Whig.** This term, which came into use about 1688 to describe the more progressive political party, was originally a nickname, said to be a contraction of a term *whiggamore* which was

applied to a body of Covenanters in the south-west of Scotland in 1648, and derived from *whiggam* a provincial term used in driving horses.

**II. mysteries.** Hidden doctrines.

**12. penetrating.** As an epithet of style it is explained by the words "in our hearts." Penetration conveys the ideas of piercing and of seeing through. Here are expressed the ideas of clearness, pointedness and vigour.

**13. ordinance, hearts.** The combination is of the nature of zeugma. The latter term is due to the Bible; 2 Cor. III., 3.

- **Para. 31. 15. It is true . . .** Here Burke considers, in what sense or senses there may be some truth in Price's statements. He distinguishes abstract and moral right, and illustrates the latter by which policy is determined.

**16. force and opportunity.** Due to the weakness and unpopularity of the sovereign at the time.

**19. only free to. . .** The theoretic freedom which they had was not simply of the character described by Price. It was much greater.

**23. commission.** Figuratively used for the powers which they felt at liberty to use as representatives of the nation. A new Parliament is supposed to receive from the country a mandate or commission.

**25. abstract competence.** Theoretical right. *Abstract* is here contrasted with *moral* because it expresses what can be argued in idea without consideration of the circumstances and requirements and well-being of the people.

**26. supreme power.** Or sovereignty. This belongs to the nation and is vested in king and parliament. But during the interregnum it was exercised by the two Houses of Parliament without a King.

**27-28. limits of a moral competence.** The bounds within which men can rightly act. *Moral* is further explained by reason, faith, justice, policy. Competence is power subject to law and right.

**29. even in powers more indisputably sovereign.** The Convention or Parliament of 1689 may have been restrained by a consciousness that it had no absolute right to make any new law.

**30. occasional will.** Desires or impulses due to temporary misgovernment or annoyance. Members of Parliament must not allow resentment or excitement to carry them away from what is permanently beneficial.

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31. **steady maxims.** Steadfast principles and rules.
32. **perfectly intelligible.** Easily ascertained and applied in practice.
36. **morally competent to dissolve.** The House of Lords can force either a dissolution or the resignation of the ministry by refusing to sanction the Budget of the year, but such action is contrary to fixed fundamental policy.
37. **dissolve itself,** End its own existence. The House of Commons is dissolved in order to be re-elected.
38. **nor to abdicate.** Without committing suicide the House of Lords might refuse to take part in the work of legislation. This also would be wrong, both because it would be an evasion of duty and because it would bring public affairs into confusion.
41. **for the monarchy.** For his descendants, or heirs. In the case of a regularly established dynasty these heirs have rights which the king cannot alienate, and the country has a right to require their services.
- Page 24. I. **cannot renounce.** To renounce would be to desert and betray the country. The Commons is under a stronger obligation than the others because it exists, and its members are elected, to represent the main body of the people.
- 2-3. **engagement and pact of society.** Both engagement and pact mean compact, or the arrangement to which all parties are pledged. The mutual obligations and duties of these three bodies constitute the Constitution.
5. **invasion.** If The Lords should attempt to dissolve the Commons.
- surrender.** The supposed abdications.
- constituent.** That constitute the whole; here king, lords and commons, or the monarchy, aristocracy and people.
7. **those who . . .** Those whose interests depend upon the fulfilment of obligations.
10. **separate communities.** The constituent parts. In some countries there are duchies or petty kingdoms subject to the supreme power.
- II. **Otherwise competence. . . .** The preceding sentences enlarge and emphasise what he means by "moral competence;" and now he concludes that if these mutual obligations are not maintained then the whole moral system will be subverted. Right will yield to might and law to force.
16. **in the old line.** Before 1689.

17. **common law.** Law that has come down from antiquity and been recognised in every generation, though it was not expressly enacted in any statute now in existence. The laws of England are sometimes distinguished as the unwritten and the written laws. These terms correspond respectively to the Common and the Statute law. The Common law has its origin in custom, though every custom is not law.

17. **In the new, by. . . .** Here Burke describes the change which dates from 1689. The statute of that year (Bill of Rights) determined the succession on the principles of the old Common law, but added definiteness regarding the form of the law and the limitations imposed.

19. **Substance** is the nature or character or intention of the law. It was not changed in substance but only in form or appearance.

20. **Describing** includes limiting.

**Both these. , . .** The Common and the Statute Law are both of equal validity.

23. **common agreement and original compact.** The supposed original contract of king and people—a purely abstract and unhistorical idea in which however Burke simply repeats a mode of thinking accepted up to his time. The Latin words mean “the common pledge of the State.”

26. **and people too.** Another assertion of mutual obligation.

Para 32. 28. **It is far from. . . .** This and the next two paragraphs admit the necessity of occasional divergence from the ordinary practice.

30. **mazes of metaphysic sophistry.** Burke asserts practical principles as opposed to subtle arguments. The term sophistry has come to be used of arguments that are apparently sound but in reality misleading. Mazes=perplexities; metaphysic=abstract.

32. **the sacredness . . .** This clause states more fully and impressively what was briefly and pointedly expressed in the preceding words.

36. **extremity.** The extreme emergency admitting the deviation.

(**if we take. . .** If we allow the Revolution to be a precedent where there is no recognised law.

38. **peccant.** Erring. On that occasion the Crown.

39. **produced the necessary deviation.** Made deviation from the regular course necessary.

41. **without a decomposition.** . . . The change should not be accompanied by simultaneous change in the other parts of the Constitution. Burke asserts that there should be no new beginning, no return to first principles, and no general reconstruction.

Page 25. 2. **a new civil order.** A new constitution and a new correlation of parts. The constitution might be reshaped so as to make either democracy or aristocracy predominant.

3. **first elements of society.** Rudimentary combinations and conditions. Cf. below "organic *moleculae*." Burke asserts that there is no necessity, on the occasion of changes, of going back to the primary elements (families, chief-ships &c.) out of which the Constitution formerly arose.

Para 33. 4. **A state without.** . . . Correction is needed for permanence. Any institution or any mechanism in which something goes wrong and cannot be put right can only proceed from bad to worse. The result might be the overthrow of what all wished to preserve.

9. **two principles.** A principle is a law or rule or truth or maxim; and accordingly **correction**, or the rectifying of what has gone wrong, is hardly a principle. The two principles that have contended in political history are **conservation** (or the maintenance of tradition) and progress or improvement. Burke is unwilling to admit the idea of progress. Similarly in public life he opposed political reform (progress), but urged economical reform (correction).

II. **Restoration.** Burke refers to the period in 1660 after the retirement of Richard Cromwell and before the recall of Charles II. Similarly in 1688-89 after the flight of James II. there was no king.

13. **bond of union.** The personal sovereign.

14. **ancient edifice.** Form of Government consisting of king, Lords and Commons: compared to a building.

16. **regenerated the deficient part.** Renewed the monarchy.  
**parts which.** . . . Lords and Commons.

19. **exactly as they were.** *I. e.*, they did not make such changes as reformers now advocate.

20. **suited to them.** The suggestion is that a more democratic constitution would not have worked harmoniously with the new sovereign.

21. **ancient organised.** . . . The Lords and Commons following their established methods (*i. e.*, as two separate Houses working to one end).

22-23. **organic moleculae of a disbanded people.** *Moleculae* means not individuals but groups such as clans or guilds or families, or the followers of the various feudal lords and leaders. If the constitution had been entirely set aside hundreds or thousands of such parties would have formed themselves all over the country in preparation for some new organisation.

24. **sovereign Supreme.**

25. **fundamental principle.** Here apparently "hereditary descent (of the sovereign) qualified with protestanism."

31. **same stock.** Both William and Mary were descended from Charles I; George I from James I.

33. **in the same blood.** Representing the same dynasty. By the settlement of 1689 the sovereigns were still to be Stuarts; but by the later settlement a virtually new dynasty (the Brunswick line) came to the throne.

Para. 34. 38. **On this principle.** Hereditary succession liable to qualification.

39. **amendment.** Alteration, or perhaps, improvement.

41. **conquest.** 1066 A. D., the Norman conquest.

Page 26. I. **great questions.** The question expressed in *per capita* (by heads, the election of the most capable from the near relatives of the preceding sovereign) or *per stirpem* (by right of birth as at present recognised). In many countries the *per capita* method still exists, because where conditions are unsettled the one who is most capable as statesman or warrior is most likely to make the throne secure. In English history the direct heir was repeatedly set aside, not so much from national choice as from successful ambition. Lat. *stirps* a root.

9. **through all transmigrations.** Through all changes. Compare the last sentence of the paragraph before the last of the book. Burke uses words for oratorical effect without intending their exact meaning.

**multosque.** . And through many years the fortune of the house stands secure, and grandsires of grandsires are numbered. *Virgil Georgies IV* 207-8.

12. **revolutions.** Including the establishment of various dynasties—Lancastrian, Yorkist, Tudor &c.

15. **by force.** As in the case of Henry VII or Henry IV.

16. **adopted.** If the throne was obtained by battle or statecraft it became at once strictly hereditary in the new family.

Para. 35. *Perverted teaching unsettles everything.*

**Society for Revolutions.** A scornful misnomer.

18. **see nothing.** . . . Fixing their thoughts on the little point of the slight deviation they have lost sight of the main facts.

23. **positive.** Direct and definitely expressed. As applied to institutions the term means, actually existing and working.

28. **era of fictitious election.** From 1689; the time when Price and his friends suppose that there was a choice made.

**bodies of our ancient** . . . Some outrages of this nature took place during the Civil War.

32. **attaint.** Find guilty of usurpation.

**disable.** Disqualify.

36. **Do they mean to invalidate** . . . ? A further consequence.

Page 27. 5. **what will become.** . . . Three examples of statutes that are still fundamental.

6. **de tallagio.** Of not granting the tax. By this act Edward I surrendered his claim to levy export duty on wool. The law is important as an assertion of the principle that the Commons alone can determine the taxation. Charles I was the last king who claimed a right to impose taxes.

7. **petition of right.** A petition asserting national rights and liberties, passed into law 1628. It was presented to Charles I., so as to make its acceptance the condition of his receiving a money grant.

**habeas corpus.** A law passed in 1679 to prevent arbitrary arrests at the instigation of the King's party.

II. **then unqualified.** James II was a Catholic but in 1685 the right of the nearest heir was unqualified by religion. Queen Mary (1553-58) was a Catholic.

14. **justly construed.** See below on the second claim.

16. **much trouble.** . . . The difficulty was that all recognised the legality of James' title. So strong was this feeling that many who considered new arrangements necessary yet refused to take the oath of allegiance to William.

Para. 31. 32. **The law by which** . . . : The Act of Settlement, 1701. Burke here repeats himself in the manner of orators. He emphasizes the constitutional character of the action taken.

Page. 28. 5. **fastidiously rejected.** In England there were hundreds of men with sufficient personal qualities. But all these were over-nicely disregarded in favour of a foreign princess who

had little personal fitness. Burke asks whether there could be any motive for such procedure except a paramount regard for the nearest heir according to the recognised principle of succession.

Para. 37. *Sophia chosen to preserve the national tradition and thus secure our liberties.*

27. **This limitation was made.** . . . Apparently Burke means that the limitation (*viz.*, protestantism) was made in order to preserve the same type of Government that had existed for a century and a half. A Catholic king would have changed the whole character of English public life. The unity would have been broken.

37. **once endangered.** It is not clear whether the reference is to James II or Charles I; probably James II.

38. **storms and struggles of prerogative and privilege.** Contests between the King and the Commons. The term prerogative is often, and here, used not only of the king's rights but of the undue exercise of them and of attempts to extend them. Privilege is apparently used of the rights asserted by the nobility or the Commons in opposition to the king. Thus a lord can claim to be tried by his peers. Members of the House of Commons are jealous of personal privilege; and the House as a whole claims as a privilege the arrangements of finance.

Page 29. 2. **our liberties.** Another assertion that these are bound up in the principle of an undisputed succession.

4. **An irregular** . . . Deviations may at times be necessary but only in painful emergencies.

7. **healthy habit.** Normal condition. Habit is a term used of the bodily condition, constitution or temperament.

12. **inconveniences of two or three** . . . These concerned both the ignorance of things British that belonged to the first Georges and the continental complications due to the connection of Hanover with the English crown (which continued till 1837).

Para. 38. 29. **I should be** . . . I should have been . . . In this paragraph Burke gives his reasons for insisting so fully on the points just stated.

34. **The dislike** . . . This sentence is in a style characteristic of Burke; periodic, with the main arguments marshalled in stately succession, and a climactic effect produced equally by the weight of ideas and the volume of words.

35. **the signals** . . . Often clergymen have been popular leaders when other competent leaders were few. Burke may be recalling instances in Ireland.

36. **change.** Revolution.

37. **contempt . . . of** Perhaps ‘contempt . . . for’ is the more frequent usage.

39. **when set in . . .** When placed in opposition to, or balanced against.

Page 30. 6. **the water.** The English Channel.

7. **counterfeit wares.** Goods that are not genuine. Opinions are here compared to articles of commerce.

8. **double fraud.** The first fraud is in the exportation, the second in the re-importation.

9. **illicit bottoms.** Vessels not authorised to convey them. By the Navigation Act then in force English commodities were as far as possible exported in English ships but the laws were often evaded. Price’s doctrines are illicitly conveyed because it is improper for a private club to address a foreign legislature.

**raw commodities of British growth.** Burke denies that the doctrines are truly British. The assertion that they are is the first fraud rendering the wares counterfeit. Here the French are deceived.

II. **smuggle.** This also describes illicit commerce.

12. **after the newest . . .** This is the second fraud. The same goods are palmed off as in the latest Paris fashion. Thus the English are deceived.

Para. 39. *What the people as a whole think.*

18. **their rights.** Because securing their liberties. Note the antithetic clauses, again increasing in volume of sound.

26. **look on . . . to be.** Look on . . . as; consider . . . to be.

21. **all the other members.** The words must refer not only to the two Houses but also to subsidiary parts and laws of the constitution.

Para. 40. **I shall beg leave, . . .** A sort of postscript to the argument dissociating himself from the extreme Tory theory of the Divine right of kings.

32. **invidious.** Unpopular, odious.

33. **These sophisters . . .** Here Burke shows familiarity with devices of debate occasionally used by lawyers and party politicians.

38. **exploded.** Off the stage; no longer existing. The word was originally the opposite of ‘applauded’.

39. **fanatics of slavery.** Men that fanatically held a slavish doctrine—*viz.*, the divine right of kings. Lat. *fanum* a temple.

Page 31. I. **indefeasible.** What cannot in any circumstances be alienated or forfeited. This doctrine was held all through the seventeenth century; the best known defence of it being Sir Robert Filmer's Patriarchal Theory of Government. The basis of Filmer's argument (which was answered by Locke and Sidney) is that no man is born free since each is subject to his parents.

2. **fanatics of single arbitrary power.** Devotees of despotism. These men held that arbitrary and absolute power was vested by God in a single man, *viz.*, the hereditary sovereign.

5. **fanatics of popular arbitrary power.** Similarly Price and others hold the equally false doctrine of absolute power being vested in the people. This too is fanaticism.

8. **prerogative enthusiasts.** Fanatics of single power, or of the divine right of kings. These would extend the king's prerogative indefinitely. Enthusiast, like fanatic, is a term derived from religious excitement. Gr. *entheos* God-possessed.

18. **prejudice.** Weaken, vitiate, or preclude (by creating prejudice against).

18. **bottomed** Based, established.

19. **If all. . .** The same point repeated in another form.

23. **But an. . .** The last sentence is turned directly against Price.

Para. 41. *The second section beginning here shows the grave difficulty of changing the sovereign or dynasty.*

27. **The second claim. . .** Burke now begins the discussion of the question on what grounds or for what offences may a king be removed. **Governors=Rulers.**

34-35. **guarded, circumstantial.** The words used in the Bill of Rights are given in a footnote and contain four distinct charges which are construed into an abdication. These charges are not of personal misconduct but rather of the negation of kingly function. Burke's criticism that they 'are guarded' and 'circumstantial' refers to the fact that they do not specify any distinct act of crime on which James could be judged. The reference to the 'original contract' for example is a matter incapable of determination. It simply creates a vague impression that the king betrayed his trust. So the subversion of the constitution or the violation of fundamental laws are vague generalities not exposed, through the giving of particulars, to any possible refutation. The abdication is not said to have been effected by withdrawal from the Kingdom alone (for that could be shown to be an act

of self-defence) but by all the counts together, so that it is a question of constructive opinion. In short, parliament asserted the abdication without committing itself to one definite ground that could be successfully challenged. The word circumstantial is explained by the phrase 'accumulation of circumstances' in next sentence. 'Guarded' is careful or cautious, so as not rashly to create a precedent.

Page. 32. 8. **parent of settlement.** A means and a foundation of future peace.

9. **not a nursery.** . . . Had the king been removed for some particular definite offence the removal might have been claimed as a precedent for dealing with any future king that might be unpopular and similarly accused.

Para. 42. *Parliament framed its policy so as to prevent struggles with the monarch.*

12. **loose and.** . . . The term "misconduct" is not definite enough as it expresses what may exist in very varying degrees. As the term is introduced by Price it is he, not Burke, that makes the case a question of words.

14. **virtual.** In substance though not in form.

17. **overt.** Open (not covert). James disregarded the law by appointing Catholics in the universities, by the Declaration of Indulgence, and in various other ways.

25. **most rigorous of all laws.** Necessity. Cf. the proverb "necessity knows no law." Burke means that it was a case of self-preservation. The state, as the statesmen understood it, was in danger of subversion.

28. **The grand policy** . . . Their supreme aim was to make a recurrence of such troubles impossible.

30. **states.** Or, estates. The lords and commons.

34. **irresponsible.** A fundamental maxim asserts that the "king can do no wrong." The meaning is that he acts through, or on the advice of, ministers who alone are responsible. If the king does not accept his minister's advice it is the duty of the minister to resign.

35. **aggravated.** Increased the weight of: opposed to 'lighten.' Examples are given in the following sentences.

Page 33. 2. **frequent meetings.** Parliaments now meet every year; but in former times kings were disposed to dispense with Parliament except when money was needed. Thus Parliament did not meet in the eleven years from 1628 to 1639. Burke here refers to the resolution of the House of Commons to vote supplies annually (and not for a period exceeding a year), and also

to make the Mutiny Act by which the army is regulated and paid an annual Act. These changes in procedure, which are still in force, require that Parliament meet every year.

6. **popular representatives and magnates.** Commons and Lords. Lat. *magnates*, *magnus* great.

11. "that no pardon . . . By these words the right of impeachment was secured. : "Pleadable to" means pleadable against or to prevent. In former times if a minister was a royal favourite he might receive from the sovereign a pardon which barred further proceedings. Of course the king still retains the right of reprieving. This right of impeachment was at that time the chief check that parliament could impose on ministers. Now when ministers are more directly responsible to the Houses, and cabinets are jointly responsible for policy, an occasion of impeachment is not likely ever to arise. A government that has lost public confidence simply resigns.

**under the great seal.** The great seal includes the royal signature. It is kept by the Lord Chancellor.

14. **The rule.** . . . The three points specified are here grouped together.

20. **right so difficult.** . . . Three aspects are given of the right claimed by Price. These indicate the evils that would usually accompany the dismissal of Kings.

Para. 43. *Price proposes a new title, which would not necessarily be beneficial.*

29. **more properly the servant than . . .** Burke's criticism that follows is partly based on the incongruity of this description "on occasions of congratulation."

36. *Hæc . . .* This reminding is, as it were, reproving. The words are from the *Andria*, a comedy of Terence. The master Simo, happening to remind his freedman Sosia that he was once his slave, receives this answer—the freedman meaning that he felt reproved for forgetfulness of the boon that had been conferred on him.

38. **After all** . . . Such change in style would do little good and would not prevent tyranny.

Page 34. 4. **assuming.** Proud, pretentious.

6. **proudest domination.** The Papacy. Domination is one of the terms used by Milton of his fallen spirits.

7. **greater humility.** "the servant of servants," or *servus servorum*, rendered by Shelley 'slave of slaves.'

13. **signet.** Seal. The design of the "Fisherman" is in memory of the apostle Peter, who was originally a fisherman

and is claimed as the founder of the church in the city of Rome. The historic reference is to Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) who excommunicated the Emperor Otho and King John of England.

Para 44. I4. **I should have.** . . . Burke again explains that he takes notice of Price only because of the practical bearings of his teaching.

Para. 45. 22. **Kings, in one sense.** He proceeds to explain in what sense Kings are servants and in what sense not.

24. **rational end.** The end is the purpose for which a thing exists. A rational end is an end commanding itself to the general reason (and not to particular interests). The end is here defined as the "general advantage," or the benefit, of the community.

27. **the essence.** The essential characteristic. Here Burke proceeds to describe or define what 'servant' means.

35. **humble divine.** Ironical and contemptuous.

38. **primitive language** The original and authoritative description.

39. **confused jargon of** . . . Contemptuous description of the inaccurate and inelegant theories and expressions of Price and similar preachers. The term **babylonian** shows that Burke is thinking of the story of the building of the Tower of Babel (Gen. xi., 7) when language was confounded so that labourers "could not understand one another's speech." Burke speaks the primal language of the law. Price pours forth the jargon of a corrupt dialect.

Page 35. Para. 46. I. **As he is** . . . Burke's view confirmed by the absence of any form of a king's responsibility.

6. **Justicia of Arragon.** Arragon is a province of Spain, formerly a kingdom. The Justicia was the highest legal functionary. From 1348 onwards powers were conferred on him which made him able to check arbitrary conduct on the part of the king. "He held office for life, he could withdraw suits from the jurisdiction of the royal judges, it was penal to obtain letters from the king impeding the execution of his process, nor could any person be made to suffer for appealing to him for protection."

**nor of any court.** . . . There is no legal court, and no legal process to which the king has to submit. He is above law, and cannot be impeached.

10. **not distinguished from the commons and.** . . Burke here asserts that the two estates of the realm are also irresponsible; that is to say neither collectively nor individually can the members of the houses be sued for the consequences of the public action of the houses, or members. They may pass acts injuring

individuals or corporations, but their action cannot be challenged. And members may use language under the protection of privilege for which others would be liable to prosecution. What they do in their official capacity is privileged.

17. **first servant.** Equivalent to 'prime minister.'

18. **responsible to it.** This assertion of Price is defended by some, but the theory of the Constitution is correctly stated by Burke. No doubt emergencies may arise when action has to be taken against a sovereign, but there is no legal provision for such, and the appeal can only be to force. Pressure can be exerted through the refusal to vote supplies, but even then a king is not bound to submit, and the only ultimate solution is war.

Para. 47. *The opposite policy would make government feeble and liberty uncertain.*

21. **no security for their freedom but.** . . . Burke thus skilfully introduces the truth that a ruler who is personally responsible is a monarch of an inferior order, less powerful and less respected.

22. **feeble in its operations.** The reference is not so much to the king personally as to his executive. The feebleness would be felt in suppressing disorder, in negotiating treaties and in all actions that require a bold initiative. It is true that ministers are in all these things responsible, but nevertheless they derive greater authority from the exalted nature of the monarchy.

23. **precarious in.** . . . Uncertain regarding its continuance. Without the sense, and the strength, of stability. If sovereigns were responsible we might expect frequent changes of dynasty.

25. **civil confusion.** The condition that would arise in consequence of weakness and uncertainty. The two extremes to be avoided are despotism and anarchy.

21. **Let these.** . . . A challenge.

27. **representative public.** If there is a tribunal before which the king can be called, it must be some definite body representing the nation; for a trial cannot be conducted before a jury of millions. What is that body or tribunal? Is it the Commons? or the Lords? or some other unheard of organisation?

29. **it will then.** . . . **the positive statute law.** Burke might argue on general principles, such as the rule that every man can claim to be tried by his peers (and therefore a king should be tried by royal personages), but he indicates that he has in reserve a definite positive enactment. Payne supposes that he refers to a law passed in the reign of Charles II, which referring to the trial of Charles I, proceeds: "be it hereby declared that by the undoubted and fundamental laws of this kingdom neither the peers of this realm nor the Commons, nor both together in Parliament

or out of Parliament, nor the people collectively nor representatively, nor any other persons whatsoever ever had, have, hath, or ought to have any coercive power over the persons of the kings of this realm." This is explicit enough, but in the case of Charles I it may be said that by going to war with his people he forfeited his inviolability.

Para. 48. *Cashiering requires force and is the last resource.*

35. **a case of war and not . . .** If force is exercised constitutional procedure ceases and a state of virtual war arises.

36. **Laws are commanded . . .** An adaptation of words of Cicero in his speech *pro Milone*: *inter arma leges silent*, in the midst of arms laws are silent. Cicero is referring to the justice of using force in self-defence.

37. **tribunals fall . . .** An attempt to equal or surpass the fine sentiment of Cicero. The meaning is that when war begins justice is no longer secure.

40 **the only case.** *Viz.*, necessity.

Page 36. I. **much more, a civil war.** War between fellow-citizens is admittedly much worse, and less justifiable than war with another nation.

2. **Justa Bella . . .** Wars are just for those to whom they are necessary. After Livy.

6. **extraordinary question of state.** A question affecting the nation as a whole and not to be dealt with by the ordinary law or constitutional policy.

8-9. **of dispositions and of means . . .** To be dealt with by such arrangements and appliances and considerations as in the emergency may seem best.

10. **positive rights.** Rights possessed by parties according to the ordinary laws and statutes.

12. **common minds.** The question is one of extreme difficulty and should be handled only by the most competent statesmen.

13. **The speculative . . .** It is very difficult to draw the line or see where it should be drawn. The word 'speculative' shows that Burke is referring not to the practical solution but to the theoretical determination beforehand.

18. **deranged indeed.** Very much deranged.

19. **and the prospect.** And there is no hope of improvement otherwise.

22. **the nature of the disease is to . . .** The particular steps to be taken must depend on the particular character of the

derangement. Burke uses the metaphor of disease and cure which he had previously used throughout his "Thoughts on the Present Discontents." In medicine a true diagnosis must be made before the right remedy can be prescribed.

23. **those whom nature has qualified.** Skilful statesmen (compared to physicians).

**critical, ambiguous.** Burke seems to mean that the situation is dangerous and the effect of any adopted policy uncertain.

**bitter potion.** The medicine is in any case like a bitter draught.

27. **The wise . . .** This sentence contains a notable study of the diversity of action belonging to different types of men. The last clause contains the moral.

Para. 49. *In this third section Burke emphasizes the principle of inheritance.*

38. **to form a government for ourselves.** To plan and adopt a new type of constitution. This would mean the right to establish a republic, or an oligarchy, or a kingdom with a single house of Parliament, or any other arrangement that may be devised.

39. **countenance.** Support.

40. **precedent, principle.** The two forms of guidance.

Page 37. I. **The Revolution was made . . .** The purpose was preservation, not possession. Note in this sentence the double use of law and liberty. The words in the plural refer to particular and definite laws which Burke considers the safeguards of all law and its benefits. The combination of these two terms was very frequent in former times, and this fact implies that law was deemed the safeguard of liberty.

5. **the spirit of our Constitution.** The meaning and purpose and aim and intention of constitutional laws and practices.

6. **policy which predominated.** The political objects and aims and methods which prevailed.

9. **records.** State papers, including petitions, addresses, Trials, Declarations &c.

10. **journals of Parliament.** Record of daily proceedings, the volumes of Hansard.

10. **other ideas.** Far different ideas.

22. **inoculate any scion.** Engraft any branch. That is to say no new principle out of harmony with the old has been admitted. To inoculate is to graft a bud of one tree into another:

Lat. *oculus* an eye, also a bud. Scion is a cutting from a tree for this purpose: lat. *seco* I cut.

24. **All reformations.** . . . This principle is repeatedly laid down by Bacon and is thoroughly English.

28. **analogical.** The adj. from analogy; same as analogous. The actions are strictly analogical when, in circumstances quite different, the same methods or principles are pursued.

Para. 50. 30. **reformation.** So called because a return to earlier and true principles.

31. **Magna Charta.** Or the Great Charter. The law wrung by the barons from King John in 1215. It was called a 'charter' because it was expressed in writing, and 'great' because it was the first full clear statement of the nation's laws and liberties.

**Sir Edward Coke.** The rival of Bacon who became Chief-Justice in the reign of James I; perhaps the first of the great lawyers usually quoted.

33. **Blackstone.** The chief writer on Law in the generation preceding the French Revolution. His chief work is entitled *Commentaries on the Laws of England*. The text refers to his edition of *Magna Charta* (1759). Born 1729, died 1780.

34. **pedigree.** The family continuity; hereditary connection.

37. **connected with another.** . . . The Magna Charta was not a new law, but was based upon an older law granted by Henry I. Both of these are called Charters because they were *written* laws. Lat. *charta* paper.

Page 38. I. **a re-affirmance.** Both of these were re-affirmations or re-assertions of the older unwritten law.

**standing.** Permanent. The term is most frequently used of rules, customs, ordinances; here applied to customs that had the force of law.

7. **prepossession towards.** Prejudice in favour of; inclination towards.

II. **stationary.** Fixed, immovable; used not of laws generally but of this point regarding historic continuity.

Para. 51. 15. **famous law.** The *Petition of Right*, having passed both Houses and been accepted by the king, became a law. It was "famous" because it was the chief law appealed to in the subsequent struggles of the seventeenth century. It is referred to here as confirming the statements regarding pedigree or inheritance.

17. **franchises, rights and liberties.** Franchise is strictly freedom (old French), but was applied to any right or privilege

granted by a sovereign ; now used of the right to vote in parliamentary elections.

28. **Selden.** John Selden (1584-1654) was an eminent scholar and jurist. He established his reputation by his *History of Antiquities* 1617, but his work now most read is his posthumous *Table Talk*. He entered Parliament in 1623 and took part in most of the events of his life-time. In his earlier years he suffered persecution at the hands of the royalists, but in his later years he held important offices. His writings were voluminous, and he enjoyed the friendship of many scholars and literary men.

25. **tribune.** Here the place where the speaker stands.

26. **Abbe Sieyes.** Sieyes was a Paris Deputy who became prominent in the Revolution and moved the motion that the Third Estate constitute itself a National Assembly. Behold him (says Carlyle) "the light thin man ; cold but elastic, wiry ; instinct with the pride of Logic; passionless, or with but one passion, that of self-conceit. Burke refers to his motion in the Assembly ("on your tribune") for a declaration of the rights of man. Carlyle calls him System-builder, Constitution-builder-General, and ridicules his conceit by recalling his words to Dumont : "Polity is a science I think I have completed."

27. **practical wisdom which . . .** These English lawmakers had theoretical ideas regarding ideal government, but these were overruled by a knowledge of what was best for the peace and prosperity of their country. They were practical statesmen.

31. **vague speculative right.** This which was being asserted in France would really expose the country to a succession of controversies and struggles.

Para. 52. 35. **The same policy.** . . . He now shows that the same principle of regard for ancient ways is embodied in the Bill of Rights. The words within quotation marks are taken from the Act.

Page 39. 6. **establishment.** Established and settled Constitution.

8. **auspicate.** Inaugurate. The term in Latin had reference to the taking of auspices by the augurs (finding omens in the flights of birds).

15. **all and singular.** Each and every (in reverse order).

Para. 53. 22. **Entailed inheritance.** Explained by the words immediately following. Entail is a legal term used of estates so held that they cannot be sold by the possessor, or alienated from the direct heir, according to the conditions of the entailment.

24. **as an estate specially . . .** The liberties are possessed as a legal inheritance and not on the ground of any abstract or general right.

28. **a unity in.** A unity notwithstanding; the centre of unity being the law of inheritance.

29. **We have . . .** Four departments are specified—King, nobility, house of commons, the people in general. In all of these the rights privileges and powers are inherited, and the prosperity of the Constitution and country depends on their harmonious working.

Para. 54. *The analogy of Nature.*

34. **This policy . . .** Burke now closes his exposition of the principles adopted in 1688 by two eloquent paragraphs in which he endeavours to place his practical principles on a philosophic basis. These paragraphs may be studied not only as a powerful climax and close, but as illustrating Burke's conception of great writing according to which thought and imagery and lofty emotion should be combined in a perfect unity.

36. **following nature.** To act according to nature has been recommended as a rule of life by many philosophers, especially by the ancient Stoics. The expression implies that in the government of the world there is a wisdom deeper and truer than that of any individual man. In the present instance the meaning is that regard for the past and the future and for national unity and continuity is parallel to the family affection that links a man to parents and to children.

37. **wisdom without reflection.** What comes to one naturally as self-evident truth or unsophisticated feeling.

38. **innovation.** Introducing new methods and aims. In Latin a revolution is styled *novaes res*—a new state of affairs.

39. **confined.** Narrow, limited. The revolutionist is morally selfish and intellectually limited. He is not a true patriot.

Page 40. 5. **transmission.** Perpetuation. The term enlarges the idea of conservation.

6. **a principle of improvement.** A rather stronger statement than the former reference to "correction." The possibility of fresh acquisition is here indicated.

7. **acquisition free.** The state is free to acquire new elements of power.

8. **it secures . . .** The conservative principle prevents the loss of any new and valuable acquisition.

10. **locked fast.** Firmly secured and preserved, as valuable family documents are.

11. **mortmain.** Literally 'dead hand:' a legal term for inalienable possession; used of family property held so that it can

not be claimed by another, or land held by a corporation which cannot sell it. The figure is from the grasp of a dead hand which cannot be relaxed.

12. **By a constitutional . . .** The parallel with nature.

16. **institutions of policy.** Political institutions found to be expedient.

20. **Our political system.** The body politic, including both the legislature and the administrative system.

21. **correspondency and symmetry.** The words express fully the idea of similarity, analogy, parallelism, harmony.

**order of the world.** System of law prevailing in Nature.

23. **permanent body, transitory parts.** Many things are permanent in form though constantly changing in component elements. Burke however finds his idea manifested only in the human race, which has its unity and continuity of history though the individuals are ever changing.

24. **disposition.** Arrangements.

**stupendous.** Transcendent; used here of the Divine.

26. **mysterious incorporation.** Mystical body. If the human race is to be regarded as one body forming a unity that embraces the past and the future the conception must be regarded as mysterious or mystical. That is to say the conception is not clear and definite and comprehensible; and in view of the greatness and supreme importance of social ties and national cohesion Burke regards it as a special exertion of Divine government and providence. Morley refers to this passage in his *Life of Burke* (page 165, Men of Letters series) and adds "To Burke there actually was an element of mystery in the cohesion of men in Societies, in political obedience, in the sanctity of contract, in all that fabric of law, liberties and obligations, whether written or unwritten which is the sheltering bulwark between civilisation and barbarism. When reason and history contributed all they could to the explanation it seemed to him as if the vital force, the secret of organisation, the binding framework must still come from the impenetrable regions beyond reasoning and beyond history."

It may be noted that the conception of an incorporation is manifestly derived from the Christian idea of the Church, which is conceived as one body inclusive of the present and the past.

27. **never old. . .** There are always human beings in all stages. Death and birth and onward movement keep the world always virtually the same.

29. **through the varied tenour.** Burke's words contain the paradox that changelessness is maintained by variety. Vigour is kept up by the passing away of the old (through decay and fall) and the on-coming of new accessions (through birth and progress).

31. **Thus by preserving.** . . . He now reverts to the comparison.

32-33. **in what we improve.** . . . New improvements are akin to the old forms (as the rising generation of human beings are akin to their parentage).

34. **in what we retain.** . . . We retain what still possesses vitality and usefulness. (Obsolete is parallel with dead).

37. **superstition of antiquarians.** Antiquarian is not used in a scientific sense of men that investigate antiquity but rather of those who collect and treasure old articles of furniture or ornament, estimating them enormously simply because they are old.

38. **philosophic analogy.** Referring to this correspondence with the order of nature. The analogy may be called philosophic because it is the imitation of very profound wisdom.

40. **image of a relation in blood.** The likeness of a relative. *I.e.*, we think of the constitution as of a member of our family or kindred. The words that follow enlarge the idea in respect of family affection.

Page 41. 5. **state, hearth.** . . . The four things there linked together are the State, the Home, ancestral regard, and Religion. Altars are used for churches and these are symbolical of religion. The preceding words "mutually reflected charities" indicate that not only are these four objects of feeling combined in our affections, but that they act and react on each other, strengthening each other. **charities** expresses the kindness of feeling and action thus cherished.

There is a reminiscence of these words in Wordsworth's sonnet on Milton.

Para. 55. 7. **Through the same plan.** . . . Additional benefits are in this closing paragraph indicated. Note in this first sentence the antithesis of *nature* and what is *artificial*, and again of *instinct* and *reason*. Forms of government are artificial institutions while the maintenance of the race is the work of nature. And again while reason is liable to err the instincts of nature are of a deeper and surer kind.

14. **Always acting.** . . . Freedom is purified from all levity and invested with solemn dignity.

15. **canonised.** Regarded as saints, or with sacred reverence. The Church of Rome from time to time canonizes, *i.e.*, ranks in the canon or list of saints, distinguished religious teachers or saints of the past.

16. **tempered.** Restrained and modified.

17. **This idea of a liberal . . .** Freedom is associated with dignity of rank, and therefore with the honourable feelings characteristic of nobility.

18. **liberal descent** Liberal (etymologically equal to free) always means superior, and suggests breadth of mind, generosity of feeling.

19. **native.** Inborn, natural.

20. **upstart insolence.** In all ages persons newly advanced in rank have been deficient in the manners of courtesy and have been prone to self-assertion. Upstart is here, by hypallage, transferred from the persons to the abstract quality.

23. **noble freedom.** This idea is developed in a succession of weighty short sentences where freedom is personified and invested with high social rank.

24. **imposing . . . aspect.** Like a great nobleman.

25. **pedigree and illustrating ancestors.** Like noblemen who trace their family to the Norman Conquest or can show distinguished ancestors in past centuries. Illustrating is adorning; here, virtually, illustrious, or imparting lustre.

26. **bearings and its ensigns armorial.** Armorial bearings and insignia. Bearings means coats-of-arms, and the figures on them; ensigns or insignia, any badges of distinction such as the stars and ribbons of knighthood. The language is heraldic.

27. **gallery of portraits.** In the halls of the nobility are many portraits of ancestors, some of them two, three, or four centuries old. Such collections enhance the dignity and value of the residences of the nobles.

**monumental inscriptions.** Records of services on tombs and monuments.

28. **records.** Historic documents.

29. **We procure reverence . . .** The comparison with nature repeated. In actual life old age and distinguished ancestry tend to make men venerated. So of ancient liberties won for us by great statesmen and leaders.

36. **who have chosen.** In choosing.

**our nature.** Our inborn endowments.

37. **our breasts . . .** Virtually the same antithesis repeated. *Breasts* is used by metonymy either for hearts (*i.e.*, affections) or for instincts (as above). *Inventions* is used here for forms of government created by speculation or mental ingenuity.

38. **conservatories and magazines.** Both terms mean store-houses; though at the present day the former is used chiefly of a place for plants, the latter of a place for gun-powder. The national constitution, by which rights and privileges are guarded and maintained is metaphorically described by these words.

What may be called the Second Chapter now begins. In this Burke's eye is directed mainly to France. France had a similar opportunity and might have attained to similar results. But by following evil advisers, and departing from proved methods, the assembly has brought on the country calamity and disgrace. This is stated in the first section (paras. 56-62); after which, in a second section (63-76) the causes are set forth. The chief is the composition of the Third Estate. The members elected were without experience of great affairs and without breadth of culture. No better were the representatives of the clergy. And to these orders were joined a few unscrupulous and ambitious nobles who for their selfish ends would humour and lead the Assembly. The want of greatness of mind in the leaders is the sufficient explanation of the degradation reached.

*Para. 56. France had the necessary elements; parts that could have held each other in check. and secured moderation.*

Page 42. 3. **correspondent.** Corresponding;—ent represents the Latin participial ending.

**dignity.** Gravity not levity; the majesty of representative government.

4. **though discontinued.** The States General had not met for 175 years (since 1614).

5. **your constitution . . .** The metaphor is derived from an estate or manor which, in the absence of the owner, has got into a condition of disrepair. As the Estates were not summoned, and all government was concentrated in the monarchy, the political rights of the various orders passed into abeyance.

7. **but you possessed. . .** The figure is reduced to the conception and likeness of a half-finished castle. The foundations were completely laid (in the sovereign and the three estates)

and the walls were largely built; *i.e.*, the powers were to some extent defined.

10. **you might have**. . . On this basis you might have called back the Estates, and extended their powers and duties.

12. **was suspended before**. *I.e.*, in the seventeenth century. At that time no nation had fully attained to constitutional government. France might have advanced as England did.

13. **the elements of**. . . Burke means that the fundamental bodies existed on which powers in due relationship could have been conferred. Revolution was unnecessary.

15. **variety of parts**. They represented the aristocracy, the clergy, and the commons.

17. **descriptions**. Main classes.

18-19. **combination, opposition**. It is the theory of a mixed constitution that parts may combine to frustrate the encroachments of another part, and that through checks and balances the good of the whole is secured. Any forward action (whether of king or lords or commons) is met by counter-action or counter-claim; and from these reciprocal struggles (of one part against another) the constitution emerges tried, improved and strengthened.

Burke imparts grandeur to this statement by asserting that the same conditions pertain to the natural world and produce the harmony of the universe. By natural world he probably means the world of living beings (not the physical world to which the words could not apply). The distribution of races, and bounds of nationalities, and even the gradations of classes are determined by such action and counteraction; and the conditions of the animal world depend on the struggle for existence. In the existing state of things, that is to say in peaceful and civilised conditions, Burke sees a wonderful harmony.

23. **These opposed**. . . Here we have a list of the benefits obtained through the conflict of interests. Rashness is prevented, deliberation is made necessary, moderation and due adjustment are secured.

30. **compromise**. The condition when neither party prevails, but an agreement of an intermediate character is mutually come to.

31. **temperaments**. Modifications. In music there is a special use of the term which may be in Burke's mind. The reference is to the removal of what is harsh and grating.

33. **headlong exertions of**. Precipitate and uncompromising action of rulers or of assemblies. This is prevented by the

balance of parties or states, and by deliberation. The contrast of the few and the many is often expressed in Greek literature.

When Burke says that the French regarded as a great blemish this method of legislation and government by compromise he is pointing to a distinction in the mental characteristics of the two peoples. The French are more ideal and follow out exact conceptions of right or truth. The English are more practical and follow the lessons of experience.

35. **Through that diversity of . . .** The various and conflicting interests voiced and represented in the different estates would all prove themselves to be securities for the liberty of the people as a whole.

38. **whilst by pressing . . .** The monarchy is compared to a cope-stone or the top of an arch which by its weight keeps all the parts firm in position. By **real monarchy** Burke indicates that he would assign important and not merely nominal functions to the sovereign. **Warping** is going in a twisted or perverse direction. **Starting** is suddenly springing or turning aside from the constitutional path.

Page 43. Para. 57. I. **You had all . . .** In this paragraph Burke emphasises the error of the French in disregarding tradition and inheritance, and indicates what might have been.

7. **trade without[a capital]** France is compared to the man who enters on business with borrowed money.

**If the last generations . . .** They might have gone back to the constitution of the sixteenth century and begun therefrom.

II. **Under a pious. . .** By cherishing patriotic reverence they would have fixed their attention on the better aspects of that constitution, and seen in it an idealised wisdom and virtue. This is a sentiment more frequently found in the poets. The past "wins a glory from its being far," an enchantment, a consecration, a light that never was.

15. **would have risen.** By this method their own thoughts, aims, ideals would have been elevated; they would have endeavoured to reproduce their exalted conception of the past.

16. **Respecting.** Esteeming highly. Self-respect, or self-reverence, is a fundamental quality of greatness.

19. **of yesterday.** Newly attained to high importance.

21. **emancipating year.** The French in their intoxication actually began to reckon time anew.

25-26. **maroon slaves.** The term was used of runaway slaves in the West Indian islands, especially of such as sought refuge in hilly districts; through Fr. from Span. *cimarron* wild, *cima* the top of the hill,

Some French apologists for the excesses of the Revolution had compared the people to newly-enfranchised slaves. The description of the French peasantry as slaves was frequent in the eighteenth century. Such explanation, Burke says, is at the 'expense of honour.' He prefers to think of them as a superior and chivalrous nation.

32. **long misled**. . . Burke prefers to think that the loss of constitutional government was the result of enthusiastic loyalty.

33. **high and romantic sentiments**. Overdone devotion. Romantic and gallant are two aspects of the old notion of chivalry. Sentiment was in various forms cultivated in the eighteenth century both in England and in France.

35. **events**. The course of history which brought all power into the hands of the sovereign and his ministers.

36. **illiberal or servile**. The words are nearly synonymous, and are opposed to liberal, generous, high-spirited.

41. **Had you made it** . . . Note in this elaborate sentence the periodic structure according to which the principal parts are reserved to the end; note also the climactic rise of the preliminary clauses.

Page 44. I. **amiable error**. The error being qualified by generous and honourable feeling.

3. **resume**. Again take possession of from the point reached two centuries before.

4. **whilst you preserved**. Burke's two principles of conservation and correction.

5. **or, if deficient** . . . The alternative, viz., the imitation of the English constitution. The French movement began with a study and approval of the English system but circumstances carried it much farther.

9. **kept alive the ancient** . . . This is a fine statement of what Burke supposes has been accomplished in Britain. The accepted principles of the later medieval period (before the encroachments of the Tudor and Stuart dynasties) were maintained with such developments or adaptations as the wider and fuller life of modern times requires.

14. **you would have rendered** . . . Here begin a series of parallel sentences culminating in a grand climax.

19. **auxiliary**. Helpful. Whatever brings contentment and satisfaction strengthens the law.

20. **unoppressive productive**. These are the two aspects of revenue to be desired, and they are greatly aided by a "flourishing commerce" which increases the national wealth and the sources

of revenue. But Burke overstates his case. The French financial troubles, though partly due to unjust exemptions, were the result of wars.

23. **free constitution.** Each of the estates would be in possession of natural rights and powers.

**potent monarchy.** The king and his ministers would be powerful both in home administration and in influence abroad.

24. **disciplined army.** This essential condition was shown to be wanting at the Revolution when the army took part in rioting.

25. **mitigated.** Referring to the harshness of the nobles towards the common people.

**lead your virtue . . .** Guide and not quench your valorous young men.

27. **liberal order of . . .** Superior members in the Third Estate many of whom might have been raised to nobility; (as in England distinguished members of the Commons are often created peers). As it was, the French nobility did not receive new accessions; and consequently they formed a caste out of sympathy with the people.

**a protected . . .** Burke's ideal for the masses.

32. **the true moral equality.** This profound observation asserts that the only valuable equality that can exist is to be found, not in wealth or rank or political rights, but in the happiness attendant on an upright life. In this respect the poor are as fortunate as the rich or the exalted. (The phrase does not mean equality in moral duties).

33. **that monstrous fiction.** The French idea of equality, in pursuit of which they abolished rank and all feudal distinctions. There can be no such equality.

34. **by inspiring false . . .** The result of encouraging the labouring classes to consider themselves equal to the more gifted or educated or privileged is to produce hopes which must end in bitter disappointment.

39. **order of civil life.** The general social system.

40. **for the benefit of, . . .** Burke here asserts that the 'real inequality' which is an unalterable fact of life is for the well-being of the poor as truly as of the noble or exalted. The statement that kings or nobles are not more happy than the poor is a truism; but at least they have more opportunities of happiness.

Page 45. 2. **You had smooth, . . .** This exaggerated statement is due to a glowing imagination.

3. **difficulty is good for man.** A true moral. The idea is frequent in Burke

Para. 58. 6. **Compute your gains:** The paragraph shows that the word 'gains' is ironical. Compare Shakespeare's "look on this picture and on that."

8. **speculations.** Theories of equality and of the rights of man.

II. **until the movement.** . When the French degraded their king they became in their own eyes splendid, in Burke's at least contemptible. Here we have a powerful contrast.

12. **false lights.** The misleading speculations or speculators.

13. **undisguised calamities.** They are plain and open to the people of other nations. These are the expensive 'gains.'

17. **sacrificed her virtue to.** This would be ordinary evil.

18. **abandoned her interest that.** She has lost both virtue and interest (*i. e.*, advantage); and she has done so most unnecessarily and foolishly, surrendering the end in order that the means also might be vitiated.

19. **All other nations.** . . Burke is referring to records of the ancient world, and to the United States of America. For example, the beginning of the Jewish nation was accompanied with a religious covenant and the acceptance of the Ten Commandments.

21. **originally.** For the first time.

23. **All other people.** Another example of parallelism.

24-25. **severer manners.** Stricter morals.

26. **and a system** The meaning is the same as in the preceding phrase, only the term 'system' suggests an organised and permanent reformation. The epithets 'austere', 'masculine', 'severer,' are chosen to express the stern moods of reformers and covenanters.

27. **let loose the reins of.** Deprived the king (and executive) of a firm control. A figurative way of saying "began to tolerate the criticisms of the court and the uprising of the mob." To hold the reins is a common description of executive government. To let loose the reins is to hold slackly; in which case the horse may become unmanageable.

**doubled the licence** . . The increased licentiousness and irreligion here referred to was mainly due to publications in pamphlets and in the Press, undermining religion and morals. These had been going on for a generation, and Burke means that

government should have been supported in checking or suppressing these things.

20-30. **opinions and practices** Doctrine and life. 'Practices' refers mainly to the practice of religion in forms of worship; opinions to religious ideas. The French Revolution was accompanied by a wave of atheism.

33. **unhappy corruptions that . . .** Evils that had hitherto prevailed chiefly among the idle rich or high-born were now circulating through all ranks and classes. These evils (which are as disease) have been spread as if they were benefits.

35. **one of the new principles.** Highly sarcastic.

Para. 59. 36. **France, by the perfidy . . .** This paragraph indicates an evil effect for the future of the world. Kings will no longer trust.

37. **disgraced . . .** Brought into disrepute the counsel of leniency; *i.e.*, has shown the necessity of severity.

38. **cabinets of princes.** Meetings of a king and his chief or confidential ministers. In the English system the ministers form a cabinet (in which the king is never present), and the prime minister conveys decisions to the sovereign. But in his *Thoughts on the Present Discontents* Burke describes an inner and unconstitutional cabinet of 'King's friends', who had a backstairs entrance to the sovereign and public affairs. In other countries the sovereign takes more to do with public policy.

39. **potent topics.** Powerful recommendations. Leniency is rendered silent. Topics are common-places.

**sanctified.** Shown to be just and necessary, (so that tyranny can no longer be condemned).

Page 46. I. **tremble at.** Utterly distrust.

2-3. **delusive plausibilities of moral politicians.** Such as recommendations to trust the people. Moral is opposed to physical, or despotic; as in the phrase 'moral suasion.'

5-6. **as subverters; as traitors.** These strong terms represent the opinions that kings will hereafter entertain of their liberal advisers: as a consequence of what Louis XVI has experienced.

8. **specious pretences.** The same as delusive plausibilities.

9-10. **into a participation of their power.** Into office, or a share of Government. Hereafter kings will very slowly confer offices on demagogues. Burke must be thinking of the parts played by such men as Lafayette the commander of the National Guard, who seems to have played a double part.

12-13. **your parliament**. . . One instance in which the king was deceived. The term parliament, or parlement, was in France used not of the Legislature but of certain courts of justice which exercised a sort of check on royal action. There were fifteen such courts in France, but the most important was that of Paris which registered decrees or edicts and claimed that without registration no new royal act was valid. The parliament refused in 1787 to register an Edict of the Finance Minister, Archbishop Loménie-Brienne, imposing a Stamp Tax, and thereby began a struggle with the Court. The calling of the States-General was mooted two years before the actual meeting took place.

17. **these men**. . . The leaders were such as Duport and D'Espremenil. The Parlement became unpopular and was finally abolished, Nov. 1790.

20-21. **Such sanguine declarations**. . . The injurious effects of optimistic advice.

23. **untried**. . . This epithet is from a line of Addison's *Cato* quoted near the end of the book.

25. **benevolence from imbecillity**. True benevolence must be rational and intelligent. Mere good-nature may be weak or foolish.

**and without which**. . . In so experimental a science as politics one can never know the exact effect of a new action. Rulers must be always on guard.

29. **medicine, poison**. The meeting of the States-General was a great event which might have been the remedying of the State and the saving of the Monarchy. But by errors in the mode of election, the fusing of the States, and the tampering with property this good was turned into a source of evil. The same Metaphor is frequently used.

31. **with more fury**. . . An exaggerated statement but the king (Louis XVI) was personally mild, though not capable, and not independent of his court. The French were notably excitable and after a time suspicious.

34. **Their resistance**. . . Paradoxical statements for oratorical effect.

Para. 60. *A climactic series of evil effects*.

38. **This was unnatural. The rest is in order**. Note the skill with which Burke links his paragraphs and here calls up both what has preceded and what is to follow.

40. **Laws overturned**. . . Another characteristic climax, the clauses rising in volume of words and definiteness of accusation.

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**tribunals.** Courts of law. There was much of violence and intimidation.

**Page 47. I. yet the people impoverished** As if they had been oppressed by taxation; but the impoverishment is due to the state of industry and commerce.

**2. church pillaged and a state not relieved.** Sacrilege without the benefits expected. The question is handled later.

**3. civil and military anarchy.** Confusion amongst citizens and in the army; repudiation of authority.

**5. human and divine.** Secular or sacred.

**6. idol of public credit . . .** Public credit, or the reputation (at home and abroad) for financial solvency and stability was placed above all other considerations (of justice or honesty), and the result was bankruptcy and the destruction of credit. Burke refers to the plunder of the church, when he says divine.

**7. to crown all.** The climax of absurdity.

**the paper securities . . .** Mere paper securities are held out for the support of a kingdom, instead of real gold and silver. The paper securities, or *assignats*, were notes founded on the plundered church property which was proving unrealizable, and were therefore unable to maintain their value. The government issued assignats (equivalent to assignations of land of the value specified) in nominal value beyond even the entire value of the land, and the circulation of all continued while portions of the land were being sold. The consequence was that they became ordinary notes dependent for value on the solvency or faith of the government. Persons who doubted the stability of government were justified in refusing to accept them, but their use was made compulsory.

**9. the discredited paper.** Burke repeats the point in a form that adds the charge of fraudulence to that of feebleness, thus hoping to strengthen his crowning illustration.

**impoverished fraud, beggared rapine.** The epithets are synonymous; the abstract nouns are used for the concrete persons, the government having been guilty of fraud in their paper securities and of rapine in their plunder of the church.

**10. currency.** Circulating medium.

**12. species.** Plural of specie; which was the ablative case (in the phrase *in specie*) of the Lat *species* used in the sense of visible coin. The two kinds are gold and silver. *Lieu*=place (Lat. *locum.*)

**13. conventional.** As agreed on.

14. **disappeared.** Money went out of circulation, that is, was hoarded up, or buried for safety.

15. **in the earth from whence . . .** Gold and silver are obtained from mines in the earth. Cf. Milton:—

Rifled the bowels of their mother earth  
For treasures better hid.

16. **principle of property . . . subverted.** All conservatives magnify as something divine the sacredness of property. In Burke's day men were executed for petty theft. The subversion here refers to the plunder of the church lands.

**creatures and representatives.** Money was created (or invented) to be a convenient means of the exchange of property. Money represents property because it is recognised as an equivalent and is given or accepted in exchange.

Para. 61. *The results of ignorant presumption and evil teaching.*

18. **Were all these dreadful. . . .** This and the following paragraph which end the present section are preparatory to his criticism of the Third Estate that follows. At every transition we see Burke "winding into his subject like a serpent."

21 **wade through blood.** Cf. Gray: "wade through slaughter to a throne."

29-30. **because unresisted.** After the National Assembly was once constituted there was no other body to hold it in check.

32. **precious treasure of their crimes.** The public honour and national character (which have been criminally squandered).

33. **wild waste of public evils.** Extensive scene of public calamities (involving waste of national life and resources). Perhaps Burke remembered Shakespeare's verse: The expense of spirit in a waste of shame.

34. **the last stake.** The last stake is national character. So long as that is sustained there is hope of recovery.

38. **triumphal procession.** As of a general returning victorious from war.

39. **pioneers.** The term is used of sappers and miners who precede and prepare for the regular troops. Here used of forerunners of the revolution, especially of those who inculcated the doctrines of equality.

41. **Not one drop.** The language of scorn and contempt.

Page 48. 3-4. **shoe-buckles.** An allusion to voluntary contributions of this character which were made. It was attempted to raise revenue by voluntary givings.

9. **base result of fear.** Fear is a chief cause of oppressive cruelty whether in kings or peoples.

Para. 62. *An incompetent collection of men.*

15. **fond election.** Free and foolish choice.

19. **formal constitution.** The manner of its constitution; its numbers, and what it represents, and how chosen.

20. **exceptionable.** Open to exception or unfavourable criticism.

**materials.** The kind of men that constitute the main body of it.

25. **title and function.** The title National, and the function of legislating for France suggest an august body representing the nation's wisdom.

30. **focus.** A point of concentration, where all rays meet.

32. **mysterious.** Because one could not readily conceive how the country could work such foolishness.

33. **But no name.** . . . Burke explains that the men elected were devoid of statesmanship; and this original defect cannot be supplied by office or honour.

Page 49. I. **ordaining hands.** A metaphor from the ordination of clergymen to office, the ceremony containing the rite of laying on of hands.

2. **the engagement of nature.** No law of nature gives any pledge or guarantee that election will make a man wiser or more capable. Engagement=pledge.

3. **the promise of revelation.** Burke supposes that scripture gives such an assurance in the case of Christian ordination; but there is no such promise in the case of politicians.

Burke here takes a very practical view of the Assembly. Its members were full of ideas regarding the regeneration of France, but they were not men who had had actual experience of great affairs. They knew little of the variety of classes and complication of interests in France. They were unable to judge either of the effects of their desires or of the methods of meeting opposition. Soon political excitement became intense; and they were at once urged by extremists in the background and misled by contending demagogues in public. Burke however omits the other side, the vacillating and irritating methods of the court.

Para 63. *The Third Estate, a body of inexperienced men.*

6-7. **Tiers Etat.** Third Estate, corresponding to the British House of Commons.

**10. practical experience.** This Burke places above rank or talents. In England the members of the Government (all heads of departments) must be members of Parliament. In France ministers were excluded. Consequently there was in the Third Estate no political or administrative experience.

**12. men of theory.** Men guided by abstract theories, which in practice are valueless or misleading.

**13. it is the substance.** . . . This statement that the masses lead or determine is likely to be true where there are no natural experienced leaders. In the English Parliament it is only slightly true; but in times of excitement the pressure from the body of members is greater than at other times.

**17. follow.** Explained in the next clause.

**22. such a supreme degree.** *i.e.*, in the leaders.

**25. men of talents.** Note in Burke this type of phrase, (as men of letters, men of light and leading), which he may be said to have established.

**27. expert instruments of absurd projects.** The phrase is antithetic and paradoxical. Burke means that the able men have to exercise their ability in carrying out the foolish schemes demanded by their followers.

**29. the more likely event.** What will more probably turn out.

**30. sinister ambition.** Ambition of a not very creditable kind, because the good of the country is not the chief object in view. Sinister is literally left-handed, but is usually suggestive of dishonour.

**31. meretricious glory.** Showy but shady distinction.

**32-33. in its turn the dupe.** . . . These selfish and questionable leaders succeed in deceiving the assembly and are thus able to advance their own ends. The assembly becomes the **instrument** or means and agency by which they prosecute their designs.

**34. traffic.** Because there are mutual dealings and compromises; leaders and followers bargaining with each other without regard to intelligent and just policy.

Page 50. Para. 64. I. **To secure.** . . . The point of the paragraph is that the general body of members should be men of rank, character and intelligence.

**3. ought to respect.** The Assembly should be an embodiment of wisdom and authority.

**II. condition in life.** Rank.

12. permanent property. Not merely wealth but hereditary lands or possessions.

13-14. liberalise the understanding. Give breadth of intelligence and power to comprehend great questions.

Para. 65. *The double representation of the Commons.*

15. In the calling. . . . Parliaments are summoned by the sovereign. In the case of France (where a new beginning was made) it was necessary to prescribe the numbers and the mode of election.

19. Six hundred. Questions of the number and powers of the Third Estate were keenly debated in 1788. The Paris Parlement was in favour of the ancient conditions according to which all were equal in numbers; but popular opinion was irresistible in its demand that the Third Estate should be paramount. Accordingly it was demanded that it should be as large as the other two combined, and to this Necker yielded.

21-22. act separately. This became the burning question immediately after the meeting in May 1789. It had been left undecided when the Double Representation was agreed to. The hope of the Court party was that the three orders would, as in former times, meet and act separately, so that the agreement of any two would negative the doings or proposals of the third. The Commons, realising that thus they could be easily baffled, refused to begin operations until voting by heads (*i.e.*, jointly and by a majority of the 1200 members) was agreed to. Thus if the Third Estate were united it commanded a sure majority.

25. melted down into one. The first fusion had reference to voting only. After a time many of the nobles and clergy withdrew, and the remainder joined the Third Estate on equal terms, whereupon it was transformed into the National Assembly. 17th-30th June.

26. the policy. Burke implies that those who demanded double representation intended also the combination in one of the three bodies, so as to make the commons all-powerful.

27-28. a small desertion. Some nobles and many clergymen were ready to support the commons.

Para. 66. 34. Judge, Sir. He now comes to details. The members as a whole were obscure men.

38. practitioners in the law. The members sent up from the various departments and districts of the country were in large numbers local practitioners who knew nothing of the great affairs of State.

40. science. Legal knowledge. Judges in High Courts are not appointed without evidences of ability and character.

41. **leading advocates.** The foremost lawyers in great cities. The English term is usually barrister, but advocate (used in Scotland) comes from Roman law and is a more general term.

Page 51. I. **professors.** *I.e.*, of law and jurisprudence.

3. **the inferior.** . . Petty attorneys.

4. **instrumental.** Doing formal work without independent exercise of mind.

7. **stewards of.** Managers or agents of local estates.

8. **notaries.** Persons authorised to attest documents, &c.

9. **ministers.** The same as 'fomentors and conductors.'

Para. 67. I5. **The degree of estimation.** . . The paragraph asserts that lawyers were not highly esteemed in France because it was a military kingdom with ideas of war and chivalry. This first sentence asserts that persons not highly esteemed by others are not highly esteemed by themselves.

. 25. **the highest of all who.** . . These included the parlements. The supreme appointments are everywhere highly honoured, but in France they were usually held by members of the nobility, and this, with its accompanying splendour, enhanced the respect and awe.

Para. 68. 31. **Whenever.** . . The natural effects of such composition.

36. **fortune in character at stake.** Reputation to lose.

Page 52. 3. **unprepared greatness.** Greatness suddenly conferred upon them; without corresponding mental training.

9. **chicane.** Cunning artifice.

10. **at any expense.** . . Without concern for the interests of the State.

14. **contingency.** Happenings, possibilities.

**It was inevitable.** The three clauses of this sentence are identical in effect. Repetitions are used for emphasis.

18. **litigious constitution** A constitution affording scope for legal controversy either in regard to its own powers or the carrying out of its decisions.

20. **lucrative jobs.** Well-paid work for lawyers.

22-23. **permutations of property.** Changes in the ownership, or laws of possession, or value, or rights and privileges of property.

27. Their objects would be enlarged. . . They would carry out their old methods but on a far grander scale.

Para. 69. 31. but these men. . . What is supposed to be said by a defender of the Third Estate. The paragraph recounts the other types elected.

34. Were they then. . . Scornful reply to the defence.

36. clowns. Persons from the agricultural districts.

39. traders. Merchants, or commercial classes.

40. more conspicuous. Of a slightly higher social position.

Page 53. I. counting-house. Office, where accounts are kept.

4. counter-poise. What balances, or keeps in check.

14-15. the sides of sickbeds. . . Medical men are not naturally fitted to be politicians.

17. stocks and funds. Money funded in government securities at a fixed rate of interest. The dealers may be stockholders, or stock-jobbers, that is professional speculators.

18. ideal paper wealth. Ideal here suggests unrealised and perhaps unrealisable; such as the *assignats*.

19. solid substance of land. The suggestion is that these men would use their position to enable themselves to get portions of the church lands. For this end they would support the alienation of the lands from the church. As holders of landed property they would have a securer position in society.

25. instruments not controls. Men without independent judgment or judicial weight; fitted to be the tools of bolder and abler men.

29. natural landed interest. In former times this was the prevailing element in the House of commons, and it is still a chief element. It is true that the House of Lords, or estate of nobles, represents chiefly this element, but the House of representatives should also contain this along with other ingredients. Further on Burke argues that property should be largely represented in order to be able to cope with the greater cleverness of lawyers and professional men. 'Landed interest' is a phrase used, by metonymy, for persons interested in land, *i. e.*, land-owners. But land-owners are expected to represent the various interests connected with agriculture.

Para. 70. 30. We know. . . The far better composition of the House of Commons. Politic=political.

4I. **dominion of chicane.** Preponderance of petty lawyers and their schemes.

Page 54. 3-4. **another priesthood.** Another sacred profession whose duties may be reckoned religious. Here Burke conceives of Law as that which administers and secures justice between man and man.

10. **useful in the composition.** Useful when in due proportion. They are one of the many portions or ingredients that make a House properly representative of all classes in the nation.

13. **their peculiar functions.** The questions on which they are experts ; *i. e.*, where legal knowledge is required.

14. **far from a qualification.** By no means a recommendation, or test of fitness. The next sentence explains the meaning.

16. **faculty habits.** Departmental, with special reference to the professions of law and medicine.

19. **disabled.** Disqualified. Burke now states the things for which a mere lawyer is not well qualified.

21. **mixed affairs.** When there are not simple issues but where multifarious interests have to be considered and guarded.

23. **external and internal.** The former term includes dealings with foreign nations, or colonies, or what is on the sea, including commerce. The latter term refers to home administration.

24-25. **called a state.** Cf. Dryden's verse in *Absalom and Achitophel*: Or melt him to that golden calf, a State.

Besides the above remarks Burke has other references to legal training of which the best-known is in his sketch of George Grenville in the Speech on American Taxation. Law he calls "a science which does more to quicken and invigorate the understanding than all the other kinds of learning put together; but it is not apt except in persons very happily born to open and to liberalise the mind exactly in the same proportion." And in the same connection he speaks of the limiting effects of confinement to official business, and the necessity, for statesmanship, of a "greater knowledge of mankind and a far more extensive comprehension of things" than office can give.

Para. 7I. 26. **After all, if . . .** Moreover the House of Commons is limited by laws and practices, checked by the lords, and liable to dissolution by the Sovereign. The French Assembly has no restraints.

29. **circumscribed.** Confined, limited. This high-sounding term appears even in Gray's elegy ; but modern taste is less latinised,

**30. usages, rules, practice.** These are largely embodied in the Speaker (or chairman) who wields authority over the House.

**31. counterpoised.** Balanced, according to the old idea still partially acknowledged.

**32-33. every moment . . . at the discretion.** This statement is verbally correct but in so far as it suggests an arbitrary power of dissolution it is misleading. To dissolve at any moment would be insanity. The king dissolves only on the advice of his ministers; and this advice is given only towards the natural close of a Parliament or when a political crisis (through an adverse vote of the Commons) has arisen. Burke may be thinking of 1783 when the king unconstitutionally dismissed his ministers, and then on the advice of new ministers, who had not the confidence of the Commons, dissolved.

**39-40. breakers . . . makers.** This epigrammatic antithesis reflects the somewhat excited attitude of Burke towards retired Anglo-Indians. At the time of writing he was engaged in the impeachment of Hastings whom he very violently attacked, though few if any of his strictures are now considered justified. The case was aggravated by the fact that these wealthy nabobs were able through their wealth to exert a strong influence on the Tory side in English politics.

**Page 55. 2. as a drop of water. . . .** Burke simply means that the National Assembly was independent of restraints and could therefore do anything that occurred to it. Such a condition is wrongly called one of power.

**5. destruction of the orders.** *i. e.*, of the first and second estates which would have restrained the third. Virtually the three orders were abolished when the National Assembly was constituted.

**6. strict convention.** Rule agreed on and strictly adhered to.

**respected usage.** In England precedents and established usages are regarded as laws.

**I2. What ought. . . .** How infinitely wise.

**heads, hearts, dispositions.** Intellectual abilities, reverential and sympathetic feelings, unselfish and patriotic dispositions.

**I5. at one heat.** At one series of meetings, or in one short session.

**I6. a totally new constitution.** The statement is hardly correct. In July or Aug. 1789 the National Assembly styled itself Constituent Assembly with the view of framing a Constitution, but for two or three years the Constitution was in process of making; and other events intervened to change the state of affairs.

Burke refers only to the Assembly in 1789 and the various local governments.

18. **vestry of a parish.** Given as the smallest detail of government. The vestry of a parish is a meeting of rate-payers to arrange chiefly for poor-law administration. So called from the vestry (or robing room) attached to a church in which formerly the meetings were held. The system is now superseded.

19. **Fools rush.** A famous line of Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, line 625. *Angels here stands for wise men.*

20. **unbounded, undefined.** Burke heaps up terms to emphasise the presumption of the French Assembly which he places in sharp contrast with their incapacity.

Para. 72. 26. **Having considered.** . . . One paragraph is now given to the estate of the clergy. In England the lords spiritual are all bishops, or men of exalted position, but in France the representatives were numerous (three hundred) and chosen from all ranks of the clerical order. Burke complains that a large number were curates, that is ordinary clergymen in charge of ordinary congregations throughout the country. Such men had no experience of the political world.

35. **curate.** Low Lat. *curatus*, one who has the cure or care or charge of souls. In England a curate is an assistant or incumbent under a rector who has the chief charge of a parish, or under a vicar (who acts for a rector).

37. **as in a picture.** The words are a metaphor describing the secondary knowledge that may be obtained from reading. One may form an idea of a distant place or object from a picture; and so an idea of a state may be derived from a book.

41. **no other eye** . . . **envy.** Burke's hatred of idealism is partly due to a rather low conception of ordinary human nature.

Page 56. 5. **any share except.** . . . These clergymen had no hope of rising to high office in the church; and therefore they were ready to join in schemes of church plunder by which they themselves might gain.

6. **balancing.** Counter-balancing and thwarting.

9. **coadjutors, or.** . . . They would either actively co-operate with, or at least not oppose, the lawyers.

15. **intrigue for a trust.** Burke assumes that any curates elected must have schemed or canvassed for election.

17-18. **the regeneration of kingdoms.** Political reconstruction. The words are chosen to remind us of their proper work, the regeneration of the individual.

20. **momentum of.** Combined product of. Properly momentum is the product of mass and velocity. Here it has the general idea of force or impetus due to combination of causes.

Para. 73. 24. **To observing men.** This and the following three paragraphs are devoted to demagogic nobles.

26. **such a deputation.** The coadjutors, who as a matter of fact joined the Third Estate.

30. **worst designs of individuals.** Selfish ambition of reckless noblemen.

36. **men of quality.** The old expression for men of rank, aristocrats.

40. **discover.** Uncover, reveal.

41. **a dignity which.** Their nobility by birth.

Page 57. I. **To be attached.** . . . They who despise the conditions to which they were born and bred are devoid of honourable feeling.

2. **subdivision.** Not merely the general but also the special, your particular town or title.

**platoon.** A military term, indicating a company or small body of soldiers to which the person belongs.

3. **first principle the (germ).** These terms indicate the beginnings in the growth of public feelings. Love of the family or the tribe or the city must precede love of the country as a whole, which again precedes cosmopolitan affection.

7. **The interests.** . . . The well-being of the little community is a charge entrusted to the members thereof.

9. **none but bad.** This clause contains the two extremes of evil; abuse involving injustice to others, treason or betrayal for selfish ends.

Para. 74. *Examples in English history.*

12-15. **here were . . . several persons.** The case of turbulent nobles during the English Civil War.

15. **Earl of Holland.** A now forgotten nobleman. At first he was on the king's side and was handsomely rewarded by Charles I. Later he joined the Parliamentary party. These again he deserted, and they finally put him to death. The king incurred unpopularity by his undue liberality towards these ambitious men. Such men arise in revolutionary times.

24. **If any bounds.** . . . At first they are actuated by avarice, but if checked in rapacity, or rivalled by others, their dissatisfaction develops into envy and revenge.

29. **Confounded by.** . . . An analysis of their character.

31. **vast and perplexed.** Their aims and objects are not clear even to themselves; *i.e.*, their ambition grows and varies with events.

34. **fixed order.** Settled government imposes obstacles, and they therefore welcome revolution.

35. **fog and haze of confusion.** Looking into the dim future of adventurous warfare they imagine they will become princes.

*Para. 75. In the past far greater men have conducted revolutions.*

37. **when men of rank.** . . . The effect of such association of reckless nobles and humble associates is to lower the whole tone of public life.

38. **without a distinct object.** If ambition has a definite and high object in view it may elevate the person and effect national good. Otherwise it degrades.

Page 58. 8. **sanctified their ambition.** A rather doubtful expression implying that ambition is in some measure purified of its sin and evil by its being directed towards the advancement of the people.

10-II. **long views.** Visions and aims stretching into the future.

15. **like Jew brokers contending.** . . . Another dart at the National Assembly and its assignats. Jews are always numerous on the Stock Exchange.

20. **great bad.** This description of Cromwell appears outrageous now: but Burke who was half a Catholic had no sympathy with the Puritan revolution.

21. **Kinsman.** Edmund Waller (1605-1687), a cousin of Cromwell, and a member of Parliament, was one of the first masters of the poetic style of couplets followed by Dryden and Pope. The quotation is from his Panegyric on the Lord Protector.

*Para. 76. These great men were able to rule and to impart greatness, but now all is base; life is paralysed and degeneracy must follow.*

29. **These disturbers** . . . A eulogy on such men of ambition.

30. **like men** . . . **asserting.** Because they had by nature the necessary ability.

34. **like a destroying angel.** A destroying angel, Apollyon, is named in the New Testament ; *Revelation IX.*, ii. Burke is probably referring to *Isaiah xxxvii.*, 36. “The angel of the Lord went forth and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and four score and five thousand.”

40. **corrective to their effects.** They did good as well as evil, and in estimating their effects on their country (though not their characters) we may subtract the good from the evil.

Page 59. I. **Guises.** The Dukes of Guise were leaders of the Catholic party in France in the attempt during the latter half of the sixteenth century to suppress Protestantism. The monstrous massacre of St. Bartholomew which took place in 1572 was an incident of the struggle. The Holy League, to prevent the possibility of a Protestant sovereign, was formed in 1576 with Guise at its head.

**Condes and Colignis.** The Prince of Conde and Admiral Coligni were leaders on the Protestant, or Huguenot, side, in the early part of the struggle. Their object was to secure toleration for the Reformed religion. Conde was killed in 1569 and Coligni in 1572. After their death the struggle was continued by the prince of Navarre. In English literature there are many references to the Huguenot struggle. *E. g.,*

Here Louis, Prince of Conde, wears his all-unconquered sword,  
With brave Coligni by his side---each name a household word.

And again in Macaulay's account of the battle of Ivry 1590—

There rode the brood of false Lorraine, the curses of our land ;  
And dark Mayenne was in the midst, a truncheon in his hand :  
And, as we looked on them, we thought of Seine's empurpled flood,  
And good Coligni's hoary hair all dabbled with his blood ;

where the brood of Lorraine is the family of Guise, and the last two lines refer to St. Bartholomew when Coligni was one of the victims.

**the Richelieus.** Richelieu (1585-1642), Cardinal and Duke, was chief minister in the reign of Louis XIII. His policy was to concentrate all power in the monarch, and thereby he weakened the powers and resources of his country.

2. **in the spirit of a civil war.** Setting one class against another according to the maxim “divide and rule.”

4. **Henry IV.** or Henry of Navarre (born 1553, assassinated 1610) was the hero of the battle of Ivry. Henry was inclined to Protestantism and accordingly his succession to the crown was challenged and delayed. Finally he acquiesced in Catholicism, but endeavoured to establish religious toleration.

5. **Sully.** 1560-1641. The minister of Henry IV.

9. **respire.** Breathe freely, *i. e.*, in peace.
10. **longest . . . civil war.** From 1562 to 1598 when Henry IV. was acknowledged King.
- 12-13. **slain the mind.** Explained in next sentence; referring not to intellect but to magnanimity.
17. **organs also of the state.** Including both the states-general and the high offices of government.
18. **prizes . . . rewards.** Eminent men could rise, through their ability, to the highest offices. The system of mere favouritism did not prevail.
20. **palsy.** Paralysis; contracted form.
21. **fountain of life.** The source of all true life and nobleness.
- 21-22. **Every person. . . .** No high aims or feelings are now possible. Every good man feels humiliated.
27. **The next. . . .** A prophecy. Low, selfish aims and artifices, such as are now found in stock-jobbers, will become universally prevalent.
30. **their fellows.** On a level with the best.
31. **their masters.** Often able to rule the nobility.
32. **never equalize.** The levelling is carried out in order that the levellers may lead and rule.
- 35-36. **pervert the natural order.** The nobility are thrown down and the upstarts rise high.
37. **load the edifice.** Society is compared to a building, here said to be turned up-side down, like a pyramid resting on its apex. Such an edifice is loaded or top-heavy and must fall.
40. **republic (of Paris for instance).** A reference to the division of France into departments which may be regarded as so many little republics. The matter is dealt with in the last part of the book.
- Page 60. 2. **on the prerogatives of nature.** On what nature, (and not human wills), must determine.

We have now reached what may be called the Third Chapter (77-97). It handles the ideas of Representation as set forth by the apostles of liberty and of the Rights of Man. The first section (paragraphs 77-81) defends the mode of representation existing in England. That system rests on two ideas,

ability and property; which means that representation is bestowed on the professional and propertied classes. Burke gives reasons why the latter should be more fully represented. A system depending simply on population seems to Burke absurd. The second section (82-97), besides further criticism of Price, works round to a discussion of natural rights, and civil convention, and the science of government generally. That science is declared to be strictly practical, and capable of being based only on experience. There are no rights except the public good, and no methods apart from virtue and prudence.

Para. 77. *Ideas of honour.*

4. **chancellor.** The keeper of seals. Barentin. On the Continent the term Chancellor usually denotes the chief minister. In England it is applied to the keeper of the Great Seal (the Lord Chancellor, the highest law officer) and the Finance Minister (Chancellor of the Exchequer). Seals are required to authenticate documents or to attach the royal signature. Lat. *cancelli* used of a railing at which the official stood, hence *cancellarius*, chancellor.

**at the opening.** On the occasion of the formal opening of the States-General.

5. **in a tone . . .** Burke characterises the statement to be quoted as a mere artificial effusion of oratory. Note oratorial (Lat. *oratorius*) instead of the more usual oratorical: flourish is from Lat. *flos* flower.

17. **the state suffers oppression.** The evil of tyranny communicated, through inversion of evil, to the whole. This would follow from the natural incompetence of the new wielders of power. Burke supposes that there is a natural law of things which makes a leisured and cultured aristocracy the only efficient rulers. In the footnote he quotes from *Ecclesiasticus* or the Wisdom of the son of Sirach, a Jewish book, one of several that are reckoned by the church of Rome canonical (*i. e.*, belonging to the canon of recognised Scriptures), but are grouped by Protestants under the name Apocrypha as instructive but not authoritative. Gallican is the old name of the French Church while it asserted a sort of independence of Rome, as the term Anglican is used of the English church. The term apocryphal means hidden, but the original sense is not always in view; 'here' means in England.

Para. 78. *There are exceptions to all statements. Every system should discover the best men.*

23. **of that sophistical . . . as to require.** The correct idioms are that . . . which; such . . . as to. Burke in

this sentence sets aside the captious critics who object on small grounds to important statements. He trusts to general reason or common sense. Every one will admit that occasionally a man of genius rises from the humble classes. These are the "exceptions" which all allow.

6. **virtue and wisdom.** Note the fundamental importance of these two qualities, the one moral the other intellectual, the one of character, the other of capacity.

7. **presumptive.** As yet not proved in actual practice, but to be presumed from qualities already shown; or from circumstances of birth and education.

Page 61. 4. **distinction.** Honours, titles.

5. **blood.** High family; aristocratic descent.

5. **pass-port of Heaven.** The Divine permission and sanction. The term is most frequently used of permission and protection in travel.

14. **grace.** Adorn. So 'diffuse lustre.'

18. **a low education.** The other extreme, referring to the labouring classes.

21. **open.** The highest offices should be open to the ablest men, whatever be their birth.

**not indifferently.** Not impartially or equally to all men (but only to the highly capable).

22. **rotation.** Taking office in turn by a regular course of succession (Lat. *rota* a wheel). Such a method is proper only where the duties are of the simplest kind.

23. **by lot.** Or, sortition. This is choice by chance. In the old world it was believed that lots were divinely directed.

30. **eminence and power.** High office.

**obscure condition.** Humble birth.

34. **probation.** Literally, proving. Simple talent is not sufficient. The various experiences of life have to be encountered. The man has to be tried and tested before being approved.

34-35. **The temple . . . eminence.** High office is compared to a seat in a temple situated on a lofty hill, which has to be with laborious steps ascended. The metaphor has been often used, as in the expressions house or temple of Fame.

35-36. **if it be opened . . .** Burke<sup>7</sup> anticipates the reply, "it should be open to virtue", by saying that virtue is not possessed except by struggles through difficulties and consequent moral attainment.

Para. 79. *On the two qualifications, property and ability.*

39. **Nothing is a due . . .** This and the following paragraph assert the necessity of a large representation of property.

41. **its ability.** This point is admitted but not dwelt upon. The term stands for the professional and literary classes.

Page 62. I. **But as ability . . .** A curious reason for the over-representation of property. With regard to this sentence Gladstone expressed the opinion that Burke was wrong as property was, in his experience, not sluggish but watchful and active. All ages however are not the same. The invasions of ability are suggested by the attacks made in France for a generation by philosophers and journalists.

6. **in great masses of accumulation.** As in the House of Lords. The Lords in Burke's day were almost all possessors of extensive estates (as most still are). The smaller estates had their influence in the House of Commons.

10. **unequal.** This is true of all wealth. The inequality in acquisition is increased by inequality in maintenance (as estates are sometimes divided between sons, or otherwise affected by inheritance).

12. **out of the possibility.** So long as the Lords are an estate of the realm the interests of the land-owners are secure. They can negative every encroachment.

13. **a natural rampart . . .** They are the natural defenders of the idea of property and of all the forms it assumes. Therefore they instinctively protect all property. They are as a wall of defence against any invader.

14-15. **The same quantity . . .** According to this argument the possessors of great estates can be trusted to defend all property; but the possessors of small quantities are not equally reliable as they might hope to benefit by a revolution. At the present day the opposite opinion prevails that the conservative elements would be strengthened by a large increase in the number of the owners of small estates.

22. **The plunder of the few . . .** This is a supposed reply to Burke, implying that it would not be worth while for the democracy to take possession of the great estates. To which again Burke replies that the democracy (the 'many') have not sufficient judgment to know this beforehand.

25. **those who lead them . . .** The demagogues who pretend to be contending for the good of the people are really selfish men, seeking only their own aggrandisement.

Para. 80. *On transmission, and regard for birth.*

27. **The power of perpetuating.** Here the principle of transmission or inheritance is introduced. We are more attached to property if it is to be handed down as a family possession. Thereby society itself is strengthened and perpetuated.

31. **our weakness subservient . . .** Although we are mortal, or unable to enjoy our lands, we struggle to uphold the rights and privileges of our descendants.

32. **grafts benevolence . . .** The sentence suggests a way in which civilisation is developed out of barbarism. Love of children and desire for family succession teach the selfish man to promote principles and laws that benefit both his own family and the country generally. And thus parental instinct aids in the cultivation of sentiments of benevolence. Burke seems to favour the view that the higher altruistic feelings are developed out of the lower self-regarding instincts.

34. **the distinction which.** Land is held by lords, baronets and country squires; all more or less distinguished.

38. **wholly composed.** At the present day eminent men are ennobled who have no landed property. But the expression 'hereditary distinction' may be held to include all such cases. Formerly when an eminent general or admiral was ennobled it was usual to give grants of land or money. Now wealth may be possessed in many forms.

The phrase "hereditary distinction" refers primarily to the fact that peerages (and baronetcies) are hereditary. Newly-created peerages are hereditary for the future.

40. **third of the legislature.** One of the three parts (king, lords and commons).

41. **sole judge.** The House of Lords is the highest legal tribunal. Cases are tried however not by the whole house but by the law lords.

Page 63. I. **The House of Commons too. . . .** The knights of the shire, or members for counties are frequently, and once were generally, extensive owners of land. They were elected as men of local influence. Most members of Parliament are men of wealth.

6. **ballast.** A ship requires ballast to steady it. Even stupid proprietors serve that purpose. The comparison of the state to a ship is frequent.

9. **sycophants.** Flatterers or parasites. The Greek term meant slanderer; from *sukos* a fig.

I2-I3. **coxcombs of.** Pretenders to. The term was formerly used of the professional fool on account of the comb he wore.

In this sentence Burke contrasts two extremes which are equally to be condemned. The term *philosophe* was in ordinary use in France for speculative bodies of men who urged the principles of the revolution.

16. **impolitic.** Inexpedient.

Para. 81. *Various ways in which France has gone wrong.*

17. **twenty-four millions.** The whole population of France.

18. **two hundred thousand.** The numbers of the privileged classes. The nobility were estimated at about one hundred and forty thousand.

**True:** if. Irony and ridicule.

21. **lamp-post for its second.** With assassination to support it. It was becoming a fashion in France for the mob to hang unpopular men on lamp-posts.

22. **who may reason.** Without fear of violence.

23. **will . . . interest.** Desire . . . good. The Napoleonic principle was, government by the people and for the people. Burke accepts only the latter, believing that the people were not able to determine what was for their good. His point of view is now out of date.

24. **great will be the difference.** *I.e.*, the injury to their interests will be great.

25. **A government of . . .** Another description of what exists in France.

30. **a dozen.** The nobles who have joined the Third Estate.

34. **The property.** The persons possessing.

35. **Of course property.** Burke correcting himself denies that there is property or anything but confusion in France.

40. **eighty-three independent municipalities.** The departments into which France was now divided. There are also subdivisions. The term municipality is more strictly applicable to the government of the towns. Varying forms thereof had existed for seven centuries.

Page 64. 2. **as one body.** Cementing principles are discussed later.

5. **accomplished its ruin.** That is, the central power will be destroyed. One of the problems of politics is the due adjustment of local and central power. Burke prophesies that the local divisions will not submit to the central supremacy.

7. **to the republic of Paris.** Not to the National Assembly but to Paris as the chief one of the eighty three Departments.

8. **monopolise the captivity.** In this sentence Burke assumes that the king is a prisoner (in his palace the Tuilleries) and that the general policy of the Assembly is dictated by Parisians only. He thinks jealousy will arise, and that other cities will demand a share in the possession of the Court and in the direction of affairs.

10. **Each will keep.** Reasoning from the assumption that men are by nature selfish.

16. **none of the equality.** They will realise that the principles of the *revolution* are not being truly carried out.

20. **no capital city.** Because the unity of the country is destroyed, and each department will have its own centre.

22-23. **democratic governments.** The Departments; also called by Burke republics, also municipalities. This use of 'democratic' is not quite the modern use.

25. **not power left.** The monarchy is no longer able to consolidate and control the divided country.

27-28. **The republic of Paris will . . .** Burke's conjectures as to the methods the Paris municipality will adopt for the perpetuation of its power. It will make both the Army and the Assembly its instruments.

30. **without resort to its. . .** Without fresh general elections. The question of determining the future of the constitution was still under discussion. Fresh elections are necessary if an Assembly is to be kept in touch with the country.

32. **despotism.** Its mastery.

**it will make efforts.** Another means, financial debauchery. Every man's interests will be at the mercy of the stock-jobbers, and the managers of the paper currency. This will succeed but only for a very short time.

33. **boundless paper circulation.** The system of assignats will be extended—other estates being confiscated as security for the paper money.

The second section of this chapter may be said to begin here. It resumes the projected application of the new ideas to England, and sets forth, in the discussion of the rights of man, the duties of government and the theory of the social contract, Burke's fundamental principles regarding political life.

*Para. 82. The congratulations have some cynical explanation. Large designs are entertained.*

38. **to which you were called.** If the States-General had been constituted on the old basis and had worked on the principles of conservation and correction.

Page 65. 14. **scheme of politics relative.** Some projects of revolutionary reform in Britain which may be furthered by the French example. This is indicated in the quotation from Price ending with the word 'liberty' which is the first point taken up.

*Para. 83. 29. Political preacher.* The words are scornful and imply that Price does not know the true work of a Christian minister.

*Para. 84. What are the changes that these men desire?*

Page 66. 4. **as a possession to be secured . . .** Burke regarded the treasure of liberty as a possession already obtained and to be vigilantly guarded, not as a prize to be won in the future by exertion or conflict.

10. **If the example . . .** It is because of the hope that the movement in France will give an impetus to a corresponding movement in England that men are endeavouring to palliate or explain away the crimes and follies of France.

17. **heroic fortitude towards.** Heartlessness. The language is that of ironical mockery.

18. **It is certainly . . .** The principle on which Price is acting.

21. **What is that cause. . . ?** Here begin a series of rhetorical questions which indicate in a long succession the changes that would be effected in England by the adoption of the French methods and policy.

25-26. **ancient corporations.** Bodies corporate recognised by law, such as the municipal corporations with their mayors and aldermen.

27. **land-mark. . .** Are the old historic boundaries and divisions to be replaced by new divisions of equal area or equal numerical reckoning?

30. **abolished.** *I. e.,* as a State establishment supported by the State or by public funds. *Episcopacy* is the system of government by bishops. Gr. *episkopos*.

33. **sacrilege.** Seizure of church money.

37. **land tax, malt tax.** Two chief taxes then levied in England. Malt is grain steeped and used in brewing and distilling.

Page 67. 1. **three or four thousand democracies.** Referring to the units of self-government. In France the sub-divisions

were styled communes and cantons, the numbers being 1720 and 6400 respectively. Burke may be reckoning the number of parishes in England.

8. **a donative.** A gift or gratuity; in this case increased pay after lawlessness. The question is discussed later.

19. **two armies.** Besides the regular army, bodies of National Guards were formed in various cities under the municipalities.

23. **for both.** For these ends and for the means of realising them.

*Para. 85. Representation in England.*

25. **I see that your example.** . . . Burke proceeds to the question of representation in which it is claimed that the French have gone ahead of Britain. Government is representative when it is carried on by men elected to represent large bodies.

Page 68. I. **in form and theory.** The House of Commons is admitted to be representative in theory, but in actual fact it does not represent the country as now developed. *E.g.*, the new cities have no representation.

3-4. **the basis.** . . . **legitimate government.** According to modern European ideas legislative bodies should be elected to represent specific interests, and the House of Commons (or House of Representatives) should be virtually a committee of the nation. But all political arrangements are matters of expediency and vary in place and time.

II-II. **inadequacy.** . . . **fundamental grievance.** This was the opinion of those who agitated for Reform Bills. The House of Commons is the main instrument of legislation and government, and success depends on the effectiveness of the instrument. On this subject Burke differed from the majority of his party.

20-21. **pure and equal representation.** The first epithet indicates freedom from undue influence or bribery, the second refers to redistribution so as to produce equal electoral districts. This equality has been more and more aimed at in the Reform Bills of the Nineteenth Century.

25. **Treasury.** A great department of State under which is the national finance. The Prime Minister is usually First Lord of the Treasury.

**a few thousands.** Price's language is grossly incorrect, but a system unaltered for a century had developed many anomalies. The franchise was not lowered to admit the working classes largely till 1867.

Para. 86. 28. **You will smile.** . . . Burke retorts as a skilled debater, showing the inconsistencies and ludicrous assertions of his adversary, and suggesting the ulterior motive,

Page 69. Para. 87. 22. **These gentlemen . . . systematic.** In this paragraph Burke shows that on their theories all things must go—Commons, Lords, Monarch, the Revolution settlement, and all that depends on these. Systematic here means rigidly theoretic, fully carrying out the idea.

Page 70. 5. **for a title.** According to Price the king's rights are based on the Revolution of 1688; but if the Revolution itself was not based on true representation its authority falls, and therewith its enactments which are quoted as the sovereign's title-deeds.

Para. 88. 14. **Something they must destroy . . .** In this way Burke moves round to the question of Church and State, and the Nonconformist demand for their official separation.

**or they seem.** Otherwise they seem . . . Their instincts are towards destruction.

16. **civil power through the ecclesiastical.** The quotation below suggests that Burke is referring to those who look for religious equality through civil overthrow, such as the abolition of the lords or the monarchy. But in the absence of clear reference the passage is obscure.

18. **the ecclesiastic through the civil.** This is the ordinary demand for Disestablishment which most Dissenters have made. It does not mean actual demolition but simply the putting of all churches on an equality as regards both self-government and self-support. The disestablisher believes that the result would be beneficial to all parties; neither single nor double ruin.

**They are aware.** This sentence is not correct.

27. **A man amongst them . . .** Burke here refers to Priestley, another Unitarian and a man eminent in science, one of the founders of modern Chemistry.

30. **fall of the civil powers.** Overthrow of the present constitution; establishment of a republic, or similar change.

31. **unnatural alliance.** The opinion of Priestley and others was that Church and State are essentially separate kingdoms with separate governments, and that an alliance between them, which brings the church under secular control, is wrong. Milton, who also held this opinion, extols H. Vane for his mastery of the subject: The bounds of either sword to thee we owe.

Para. 89. 39. **It is no wonder. . . .** Burke is now approaching the main idea of this section—the rights of men. But he first exhibits his opponents as disregarding their own country and its traditions and looking abroad for new light. In this way they discover the theory of the "rights of men", a theory fit only for private speculation,

Page 71. 10-11. **experience as the wisdom of unlettered men.** This fine phrase suggests that the wisdom of lettered men is theory—the system of politics evolved, with the aid of books, out of their minds, for which in turn Burke has an equal contempt.

16. **the rights of men.** This is the abstract principle before which all charters go down. He has prepared us to listen by the description of it as a mine. The next sentence emphasises its absolute character.

17. **prescription.** Title based on long usage.

18. **no temperament.** No modification in deference to circumstances or suitability.

19. **anything withheld.** The same as “no compromise.”

22. **security in the . . .** The two grounds on account of which a government might feel secure are here indicated.

25. **speculatist.** Theorists.

**quadrate.** Square. Lat. *quadra*, *quatuor* four.

28. **greenest.** Most recent. Greenest is opposed to ‘old,’ and ‘violent’ to beneficent.

30. **question of abuse.** Misgovernment.

31. **competency title.** Right or legality.

32. **clumsy subtlety.** An oxymoron. Subtlety is the more Latinised form of subtlety. Burke applies the term to any minute theorizing.

33. **Let them. . . .** He does not care what their private theories and discussions may be if they keep out of public life.

34. **Ilia se jactet.** Let Æolus boast in that hall and reign in the confined prison of the winds. Æolus was the god of the winds who kept them in an underground cave, except when they were let loose and created storms. The words are from the First Book of Virgil’s *Aeneid* and are spoken by Neptune, a greater divinity, who ruled the sea.

36. **Levanter.** A violent wind; used of a storm in the Mediterranean blowing from East—the Levant being a term for the region eastward of Italy, or the Eastern side of the Mediterranean (lit. rising).

38. **to break up. . . .** To produce a deluge of rain.

Para. 90. *A paragraph on the real rights of men.*

40. **Far am I from denying. . . .** The point is the distinction between true and false claims, real and pretended right.

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Burke asserts that he is prepared both to acknowledge and to concede all true rights.

Page 72. 6-7. **the advantages for which it is made.** This is Burke's definition, and various points are specified in the following sentences. Note fundamentally that Burke regards civil society as a thing made, arranged and agreed upon, not a thing naturally existing, and that consequently the rights depend upon the agreement—they are not matters of abstract theory.

8-9. **law itself is only. . .** A notable definition based on the fact that law and justice exist for the protection and benefit of man.

II. **fellows.** Their partners in Society, with special reference to those they come in contact with.

I2. **in public function.** In political service. *I.e.*, servants of the crown have just the same rights as others.

I4. **and to the means. . .** No vexatious laws should hamper the use of means for making occupations more profitable.

I7. **to instruction. . .** The State should maintain an educational system and a Church.

I8. **whatever each man. . .** This clause may be accepted as a definition of freedom as a social possession.

21. **a fair portion. . .** That is a share in the benefits and fruits of society.

24. **equal rights, but not to equal things.** In principle the rights are equal, especially such rights as justice, protection, liberty to labour. But in regard to the produce, not of the individual but of society as a whole, Burke draws a distinction of degree. This he explains by representing civil society as a vast partnership in which different individuals have a different number of shares. That is to say, men of ability or rank or property or education have far more shares than those who have not these elements of superiority. They contribute more to the life of the society and they are entitled to a greater proportion of its fruits or dividends.

30. **as to the share of power. . .** Here Burke makes a great exception. He denies that every member of the society has a right to a share in power or management. In other words he denies any natural right to a vote in parliamentary, municipal or district elections. The franchise is a matter not of right but of favour.

36. **to be settled by convention.** The question of participation of power is to be settled by agreement. In practice this means that the possession of the franchise, or of parliamentary and other suffrages, is determined by the estates of the realm,

*i.e.*, by Parliament. And in accordance with this opinion Burke opposed the lowering or extension of the franchise. Burke's argument seems to us inconsistent. If all are partners in the civil society all should have a voice in its management as well as a share in its produce. But Burke is right in regarding the question as a practical one. For there is no conventional partnership or contract; and all such theories are but metaphors.

Para. 91. 37. **If civil society.** . . . Note again how Burke links his paragraphs, having in this case gradually wound round to the idea of "convention." Here he asserts that natural rights must be abandoned for conventional regulations.

38. **its law.** Authoritative; determining all rules of action.

39. **limit and modify.** Determine the degrees and bounds.

Page 73. I. **its creatures.** Created by it, *i.e.*, appointed and arranged thereby.

**They can . . .** They do not and cannot exist except as called into being by such agreement.

4. **rights which do not . . .** Such rights as the supposed natural freedom: classically expressed by Dryden

I am as free as Nature first made man,  
Ere the base laws of servitude began,  
When wild in woods the noble savage ran.

II. **first fundamental right.** Burke supposes that the primary theoretic right is to judge our own case, and consequently assert by force if possible our own rights. Now in actual fact people settle disputes by arbitration, and society sets up tribunals to determine the justice of things. Thus Burke argues that the first requirement of society is the surrender of the first natural right, and that men do so voluntarily in order to obtain the benefits of society. The value of this argument depends on the truth (or otherwise) of the assertion that man's first right (as between himself and his fellows) is to judge his own cause. Perhaps this statement is as sophistical as those of Price.

**uncovenanted.** Having not yet entered into the covenant or compact of society.

15. **abandons the right of self-defence.** This is no real argument. Men now defend themselves under forms of law more effectively than in the days of combat. What is abandoned is the right to strike except in cases of necessity.

17. **of an uncivil and of a civil.** This is a very effective epigrammatic sentence. It assumes that there are two totally distinct states of existence, the savage and the civil, and that the same person cannot be in both. These ideas were familiar to the eighteenth century but they are now obsolete.

**21. surrender in trust.** Surrender to the society in trust that it will preserve for him, more surely, all that is really beneficial. The term trust implies that the supreme and ultimate power belongs to the society as a whole, not to the parties that form the governing constitution.

Para. 92. 23. **Government is not.** . . . Burke now passes from rights to needs. Government is set over us to supply our needs. The transition is as usual slow.

**27. their abstract perfection is.** . . . Another epigrammatic apophthegm. It virtually identifies natural right with imaginable wish; which is playing with language.

29-30. **Government is a contrivance.** This may be regarded as a definition. The term wants is unfortunately ambiguous and is here ambiguously used. In the preceding sentence want is equivalent to wish. Now he proceeds to the meaning needs.

**34. out of.** From, provided by.

**of a sufficient restraint.** . . . This is a real need but it may be doubted if it is part of the compact or convention, except in so far as injury to others may be involved.

**37. even in the mass.** In the nation as a whole. Nations pass through changing moods, and the Constitution should be so framed as to prevent occasional moods from upsetting fixed policy.

**41. by a power out of themselves.** This is scarcely Whig doctrine, but it accords with Burke's disregard of the idea of exact representation. Government presents itself to the imagination of Burke not as a thing appointed by the people, but as a sort of Divine agency mysteriously placed over the people. It is easy to reply that the members of the estates that constitute this exalted power need the restraints as much as others. Burke's language is to be regarded as popular, and expressive of the reverence which the masses of men should feel for centralised authority and justice.

**Page 74. 6. Liberties and the restrictions.** Degree of freedom and the restraints on freedom.

Para. 93. II. **The moment you.** . . . This transitional paragraph prepares for the description of the science as not *a priori*. The emphasis in this sentence is on "convenience"; and the following sentences show the difficulty of the subject.

**17. due distribution,** *i.e.*, amongst the governing bodies, and between central and local authorities.

**26. right to food or to.** . . . This illustration or comparison is introduced in accordance with Burke's opinion that nothing was effectively stated without the aid of a concrete image.

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27. **The question is.** The important and practical question is (how to get the food and medicine, not whether food is a good thing).

Para. 94. *Caution and careful observation needed. An experimental science.*

32-35. **constructing, renovating, reforming . . .** Three degrees of political effort, in descending scale.

34. **every other experimental.** Politics is thus placed amongst the sciences based on observation and experience. These include the physical, biological and social sciences; or the inductive as opposed to the deductive.

35. **not to be taught à priori.** *A priori* is distinguished from *à posteriori*, the former meaning from causes to effects, the latter from effects back to causes. The one method proceeds from laws, principles or ideas on to their applications in practice, the other proceeds backward from the facts of experience to the laws that explain them.

38. **moral causes.** Moral is opposed to physical (not to immoral).

39. **prejudicial.** Injurious.

Page 75. 5. **latent.** Hidden. For this reason Burke rightly recommends infinite caution in making changes. The immediate effect may be followed by ultimate effects of a different kind, and in all cases something unexpected happens.

10. **so practical in itself and . . .** The science is not only an experimental one (like biology) but is also practical in its objects, that is to say it bears directly on human life and well-being. A false biology does not seriously affect human happiness, but false systems and schemes of government may have ruinous effects on the nation.

12. **even more experience.** Parallel instances may be such as are known only to learned students of history.

19. **without having models . . .** Without sure grounds of certainty. Approved utility=proved usefulness.

Para. 95. *The complexity of social life.*

21. **These metaphysic rights.** Burke proceeds to illustrate the difficulty by reference to the complexity of life. Metaphysic=abstract or ideal.

23-24. **refracted.** The illustration is from Optics. A ray of light passing from air into water is at once bent into a new direction. The change of medium produces a change in its course. This is called refraction.

**27-28. refractions and reflections.** Both are terms of Optics. In reflection the ray meeting a surface is turned back but there is no change of medium (with new density), and therefore the angles of incidence and reflection are equal.

Burke uses the two terms to express the multitudinous changes that arise in the mixed conditions of multifarious human life.

**29-30. in the simplicity of their original direction.** The effect originally in view is soon lost sight of, being completely altered by the circumstances of life.

**32-33. no simple disposition or direction of power.** Such as pure monarchy or sheer democracy, or government by nobles alone, or clergymen alone. Government must be complex so as to suit human nature and the variety of human affairs.

**35-36. simplicity of contrivance.** Government on one plan, following out one idea.

**40-41. fundamentally defective.** Because the world is not simple. Men, manners and matters vary.

Page 76. I. **If you were to contemplate.** In this and the two following sentences Burke allows that some of the ideas of the theorists would work well in limited spheres; but in other spheres he contends that they would be ineffective or even injurious. It is better to seek substantial good for the whole than perfect good for a particular part while other parts are not at all benefited.

**7-8. anomalously answered.** Fitted in a somewhat irregular way.

Para. 96. *Real rights are reached by calculation and compromise.*

**13. extremes.** Things carried to the utmost possible interpretation: opposed to compromises, temperaments, adjustments.

**14-15. morally and politically false.** Politically inappropriate, and therefore from the point of view of human requirements (*i.e.*, morally) false.

**16. sort of middle.** Opposed to extremes, involving mutual concession.

**18. their advantages.** This point is restated in order to make clear that they are determined not theoretically but by consideration and calculation of effects.

**22. a computing principle.** Explained in the next clause. Burke uses the analogy of mathematics while repudiating the simplicity of a mathematical problem.

**25. true moral denominations.** Entities of a moral character (*i. e.*, affecting human life and action). The word 'denominations' is suggested by the figures used in arithmetic or algebra, which denominate or designate something real.

Para. 97. *All power requires restraint.*

**27-28. confounded with their power.** Their idea is that a nation acting collectively can do for itself whatever it desires, there being nothing able to restrain it ; but this is to set aside the question of moral law. A nation should be bound by righteousness and the knowledge that power is not right.

**30. till power and right.** Until moral distinctions are obliterated ; *i. e.*, never.

**32-33. first of all virtues prudence.** The cardinal virtues of the Greeks were prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude. Prudence may be called first, as self-regarding ; but in that case first is not necessarily highest.

**34. reasonable.** According to reason, or the rational faculty.

**35. for their benefits.** This together with 'reasonable' is Burke's explanation of prudence.

**pleasant.** Witty or humorous, a meaning frequent in the 16th and 17th centuries. Burke dissents from the opinion that even poets should be allowed to injure themselves.

**35. Liceat . . .** Let poets be allowed to perish.

**38. Ardentem . . .** Coolly he leapt into burning Ætna. Empedocles, the philosopher-poet, is said to have thrown himself into the crater of Ætna, the burning mountain in Sicily. The supposition was that he wished to be supposed to have joined the gods, but the casting up of his brass sandals revealed his real fate. Milton (*Paradise Lost* III., 470) places in the Paradise of Fools him

who, to be deemed  
A god, leaped fondly into Ætna flames,  
Empedocles.

The quotation in the text is from Horace, *Ars Poetica*. Parnassus is a mountain in Thessaly sacred to the Muses.

The Fourth chapter, which is the climax of the argument, deals with character and manners ; and the present condition is painfully contrasted with that of former times. There are three sections. The first (98-105) shows that this habitual talk is

injurious to the mind ; it loosens real power while it hardens the affections and imparts a taint. This is seen in such men as Price and Peters. In the second section (106-118) attention is directed to France whose National Assembly is neither free nor dignified, and where a succession of outrages has been perpetrated on the sovereign. In the third section (119-135) the author bemoans the death of chivalry, and recalls the advantages to Europe that accrued from that famous system. For the future he anticipates not only despotism in government, but the destruction of literature and the lowering of civilisation.

Para. 98. *Loose talk of revolutions is like the undue use of medicines.*

Page 77. 6-9. **The kind . . . will cheat.** If this style of speech is allowed to go on it will gradually do mischief. Burke proceeds to say that the iteration of false and dangerous teaching gradually enervates.

14-15. **the extreme medicine. . . . daily bread.** This clause is notable both for the idea and the metaphor. A revolution is an extreme medicine given as a last chance when all else has failed. To take such a violent medicine frequently is to injure health.

16. **valetudinary.** The condition of being an invalid, sickly. So 'habit' is a medical term, equal to condition.

17. **mercury sublimate.** A dangerous medicine of which mercury is the chief ingredient.

18. **provocatives.** Stimulants.

19. **cantharides.** The name of insects, one of which, the blistering fly, is largely used in the preparation of plasters. This plural form is used of the dried insects. The sing. is cantharis. The insect is a sort of beetle.

Para. 99. *On the want of steadfast principle.*

20. **distemper of remedy.** Unhealthy practice of taking frequent and strong medicines; used metaphorically of politics.

22. **the spring.** The strength and elasticity.

24. **patient period of . . .** An historic example. Under the Roman empire schoolboys raged against tyrants, though the old manliness was gone.

26. **cum perimit . . .** When the crowded class-room annihilates the cruel tyrants; from Juvenal's *Satires* VII. 151.

Juvenal, the greatest of the ancient satirists, lived from 38 to 120 A. D. The reference is to the age of Domitian 81-96 A. D.

30. **abuses.** Misuses, injures. Extreme speculations tend to undermine all principles.

31-32. **high-bred republicans.** Men of high birth and breeding who in early years affect republican or advanced political opinions. Such men, being naturally self-seeking, usually end as Tories and courtiers.

35. **a tedious, moderate, practical . . .** Burke is describing himself and others who constitutionally opposed encroachments of the prerogative or of the commons.

Page 78. 1. **Hypocrisy, of course . . .** Insincere men profess what seems grand or popular.

5. **rather levity . . .** Levity rather than deceit. Some were mainly actuated by thoughtless impulses.

8. **professors. I. e., of opinions.**

10. **civil and legal resistance.** Constitutional opposition. These high-flying men are always at extremes and dislike quiet painstaking work.

12. **a war or a revolution or it is . . .** The two alternatives are, something heroic (war or revolution) and nothing at all.

13. **Finding . . .** Being checked they come to regard public principle as unimportant, and after a little adandon for it for some slight selfish reason.

19. **Some indeed are . . .** He now refers not to parliamentary politicians but to men like Price who work steadily for some special ends.

23. **some change.** Some revolutionary scheme; as disestablishment, or universal suffrage.

25. **bad citizens.** Bad not as men in respect of private character but as members of the community or state, ready to disregard the general interest on account of their own special desires or projects.

26. **unsure connexions.** They cannot be relied on to co-operate with others. Thus Price, a radical, supported Pitt and the conservatives against Burke and Fox. Party, as distinguished from faction, is a body of men united for public purposes by community of opinions and interests and by mutual regard. A party is strong only when all can rely on the support of all. George III., and his advisers endeavoured to destroy the Whig party by encouraging sectional movements. Thus the Bedfords

and Grenvilles stood aloof from the general body of the Whigs and sought their more limited interests.

27. considering their speculative designs . . . Here Burke is attempting to explain the mind and aims of such men as Price and Priestley, and their followers. For the sake of some one design which they consider of very great importance (the reference is specially to Disestablishment) they are prepared to sacrifice all ordinary interests.

All that follows in this paragraph is to the same effect, and is mainly based on Burke's experiences in the preceding six or seven years.

37-38. violent and stretched prerogative. One extreme, when they support unconstitutional action on the part of the king or his advisers (such as the dismissal of the Portland ministry in 1783).

39. wildest democratic. The other extreme, when they defend the French Revolution.

41. to cause person, or party. There is no intelligible explanation of their inconsistency. They are quite unreliable.

Page 79. Para. 100. *The moral taint.*

I. in France you . . . In your particular circumstances you cannot see this aspect of character as we in England do. Your extremists are having their own way and have not to scheme for the future.

6. militant, triumphant. Struggling, victorious. These are theological terms describing the Church as it is on earth, and as it is in heaven. Burke's application is different. Militant here means, confronted by obstacles.

7. when its power . . . Is unrestrained. Burke refers mainly to the humiliation of the monarchy.

9. to any description. To any whole class. He is referring to individuals or sections.

17. they temper and harden. This is the effect on character. Men are prepared for things that would formerly have shocked them. Temper is used in the sense which it bears when we speak of tempering steel, or a sword.

19-20. in extreme occasions. Such as a war or a revolution. These occasions (he says) may not arise, and consequently the mind has been hardened for nought.

91. gratuitous taint. Unnecessary injury. The word taint suggests a moral stain.

22. **moral sentiments.** The feelings and judgments of one's moral nature. These may be depraved without the political gain.

26. **his nature.** What man is, in respect of affections and character.

27. **Without opening.** . . . Without bringing new knowledge or light to the intellect they impede the course of moral affections.

Para. 101. 32. **The famous sermon.** . . . The above assertions are illustrated by Price's Sermon, with its childish raptures.

37. **bloodless reformation.** Such as took place in 1688.

38. **flat and vapid.** Dull, uninteresting.

39. **There must be** . . . Something highly dramatic.

Page 80. I. **grown torpid** . . . After a long period of quiet prosperity something highly exciting is desired. Security and prosperity are supposed to have dulled the mind.

5. **This inspires** . . . Note the gradual kindling of the fire from 'juvenile warmth' to 'full blaze.'

9. **Pisgah.** Lofty point of vision. The figure of Antonomasia. Pisgah is the name of a summit from which Moses before his death saw the "promised land" of Palestine to which the people whom he had led from Egypt and formed into a nation were about to advance. "Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah that is over against Jericho. And the Lord shewed him all the land." Deuteronomy XXXIV., i.

10. **the free, moral, happy** . . . All highly ironical.

Para. 102. 16. **Lord, now lettest.** Quoted from the New Testament, Luke II, 29, spoken at the time of the birth of Christ.

23. **I have lived** . . . The clauses are intended to form a climax.

Para. 103. 28. **Before I proceed** . . . This paragraph gives a historic parallel.

29. **to overrule** . . . In the above clause "diffusion of knowledge." Burke's language is full of mockery.

Page 81. 13. **precursor.** Forerunner. Peters is a precursor of Price.

15. **triumphantly chosen.** The appearance of a republican in the royal chapel was an evidence of victory over the king.

21. so soon. He lived on from 1649 till after the Restoration, 1660.

24. a sacrifice. He was then executed.

25. Pontiff. Chief priest, a term applied to the Pope. Lat. *pontifex*. Peters by riding in front constituted himself leader.

28. illumination. Enlightenment. This property was constantly claimed by French *philosophers*. Hence the words "assume to itself an exclusive knowledge."

Para. I04. From church to tavern. The address to the Assembly.

36. After this sally. The above quotation from Price's sermon. A sally is an outburst, often suggestive of gaiety.

38. spirit and letter. Both the intention and the form. Burke refers to the fact that they both blasphemously quote the same text of Scripture.

Page 82. I. the fabricators. . . This and the following phrases are constructed from Price's threefold claim.

3. strutting. This term which is literally true of Peters is metaphorically applied to the members of the Revolution Society.

6. donative. Used with reference to diffusion. Burke seems to mean that Price was diffusing knowledge as gifts are bestowed by a general, and then that his Society proceeded to further diffusion of what they had received from him.

9. bountiful communication. The same diffusion.

12. oracular tripod. Originally the stool from which the priestess at Delphi uttered her oracles. Tripod means three-footed. Price is compared to the priestess; and as she spoke under the influence of fumes of incense and intoxicants so Price speaks in the gross excitement of political passion.

Para. I05. The monstrous sixth of October.

17. I find a preacher . . . Burke very severely denounces the abuse of Scripture.

19. nunc dimittis. Now thou lettest go. These are the first words of the Latin version of the utterance of Simeon.

24. pity and indignation. These terms and "spectacle" suggest that Burke is partly thinking of the tragic stage. The purpose of tragedy, according to Aristotle, being to purify the passions of pity and terror.

25. **leading in triumph.** The words are repeated from Price. The reference is to the bringing of the king and queen from their ordinary residence at Versailles (about 12 miles from Paris) into the city where they were placed in the palace of the Tuilleries and constantly watched. The event took place on the 6th Oct. 1789. Crowds of people went out from Paris on the 5th. Next morning they broke into the palace and committed outrages. There were sufficient troops to disperse the mob, but the king deemed it better to yield to their desire that he should live in the capital. See the graphic description of the "ludicrous-ignominious" procession in the Seventh Book of the First Volume of Carlyle's History. It is headed the Insurrection of Women.

26. **unmanly and irreligious.** The words regard the event from the human and divine sides. The unmanliness consists in outraging those who cannot protect themselves and, especially, a famous queen. The irreligion is partly in the irreverence.

27. **unhallowed transports.** Profane raptures.

33. **American savages.** The Red Indians of whom much was written in the eighteenth century.

34. **Onondaga.** One of their chief villages.

35-36. **hung round with scalps.** These are the ornamental trophies. Chatham made a famous reference to the "tomahawk and scalping knife of the savage."

39. **civilised martial nation.** France was the typical martial nation, and the military code of honour was supposed to be very high. Cf. later "a nation of men of honour and of cavaliers."

40. —**if a civilized.** This clause added parenthetically at the end suggests that France has lost its historic virtues. The personal triumphing over a fallen and afflicted king and queen suggests that the gallantry and generosity of former days have now ceased to exist.

Para. 106. *France as a whole is not to be blamed; nor is the Assembly free, but English admirers have perverted minds.*

Page 83. 3. **not the triumph of France.** This wild triumph could not have corresponded to the feelings of France as a whole. It was the 'triumph' of only a few.

4. **I must believe.** Burke thus states what France ought to feel and what the Assembly ought to feel.

8-9. **authors, actors.** The former are those who devised the 'insurrection,' the latter those most active in carrying it out. Behind all such events are unseen instigators who are the real authors.

II. **destitute even of . . .** They are under the controlling influence of greater force.

13. **apology.** Defence : what can be said in explanation or mitigation.

14. **when we approve.** 'We' means Price and Co.

15. **must bear.** Cannot help bearing.

**the degenerate choice. . . .** A strong balanced clause tracing the effect to perversion of mind and implying strong condemnation.

Para. 107. 17. **With a compelled . . .** This paragraph powerfully describes the humiliating position of the Assembly, constantly over-awed by unprincipled and violent men. It is not a free assembly.

18. **under the dominion . . .** That is, they have no free vote, they must do what the mob requires.

19. **in the heart . . .** The Assembly representing the whole of France are dominated by the City of Paris in which they sit and which does not concern itself with the interests of France as a whole.

22. **neither from the charter. . . nor from.** In former times self-governing constitutions were conferred on favoured cities by royal charter, as in the case of the royal burghs of Great Britain. At the present day local self-government is conferred by the legislature (county councils and district councils and town councils, &c.) In the case of Paris neither of these methods was employed. The Paris Municipality was formed independently of the National Assembly, and at first for a temporary purpose (not requiring a charter). The state of matters arose in connection with the election of the Third Estate. By the French system members were not elected directly by the people at large but indirectly through intermediate bodies. Paris was divided into 60 divisions or wards, each of which chose representatives to act for the city. Later when permanent constitutions were being settled these, with increased numbers of representatives, constituted the Paris republic, or municipality or department.

24. **by an army.** The new National Guards which were raised by the local government on the dismissal of Necker, July 1789. These command the situation in Paris.

28. **after a gang . . .** Violence was becoming frequent (both sides guilty), and many Conservative members withdrew alleging that their lives were in danger.

35. **captive itself.** Under the mob.

36. **at third hand.** Because first devised in the coffee-houses and similar places of meeting. Later the system of clubs developed and ruled.

Page 84. 2. **decided.** *i.e.*, in coffee-houses or clubs.

3. **under the terror . . .** Aspects of the general intimidation.

7. **medley of all conditions . . .** Curious mixture of all ranks. Carlyle in his chapter, The Muster, Vol. 2. Book I. ch. 3, gives the leading names. There were men from Spain, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Netherlands, &c. Of Englishmen he mentions Needham or Nesham and Tom Paine, also Paul Jones who fought for America. "Of all strangers far the noblest for us is . . . world-citizen Anacharsis Clootz, from Cleves . . . hot metal, full of scoriae . . ."

10. **Catiline, Cethegus.** Daring noble youths of Rome, who with others formed a conspiracy for the overthrow of government, which was discovered and suppressed by Cicero, who happened to be the consul of that year. The plots began in 64 and were continued through 63 B. C. Cethegus was killed and Catiline, a little later, fell in battle.

12-13. **public measures.** Laws to be enacted.

13. **monsters.** Monstrosities. (Used here of things, not persons).

14. **academies.** The reference is not to regular institutions or schools but to places of meeting where harangues were regularly spoken. The original academy of Plato was in a grove and some of the French meeting-places were of the same description.

15. **seminaries,** With the root idea of seed-sowing. Ideas were thrown out at the academies which were taken up in the clubs.

The passage that follows is an indictment hardly to be surpassed in literature.

20. **Humanity.** Benevolence and tenderness (derived from humane).

23. **treason to the public.** An antithesis. Burke has previously indicated how the heart is hardened. This sentence shows how the hardened seek to justify themselves.

24. **as property . . .** In proportion as . . .

27. **for the good order.** An astonishing contrast: irony.

29. **carcasses.** Dead bodies of executed criminals: an instance of the coarseness that sometimes disfigures Burke's style.

30. **promoting their . . .** They are so little shocked by base crime that they show special honour to the relatives of condemned persons. The 'promoting' refers to the advancement in the National Guard of the brothers of a man condemned for forgery.

**On the title of means, on the ground of, on account of.** It may have been felt that the old punishment of death for forgery was unjust.

32. **The same end.** Execution on account of crime.

Para. 108. 34. **The Assembly, their organ.** . . . Burke now censures the want of dignity in the assembly. Organ=instrument.

37. **The comedians of a fair . . .** Like the inferior actors or buffoons who attend fairs where audiences are easily obtained. Fairs were stated markets, usually held once a year in each place.

41. **applaud, explode.** Opposites, from the same root.

Page 85. 3. **servile petulance.** A sort of oxymoron, combining the ideas of submission and fault finding.

5-6. **the gallery . . . the house.** "The house" is the conversational expression for the House of Commons; the galleries are upstairs where reporters and visitors are admitted. In Paris these visitors (who have no right even to admission) dictate to the legislative body. (In London the galleries are cleared and emptied if there is the slightest demonstration, but in Paris visitors were allowed to show their feelings.)

8. **physiognomy and aspect.** The features and look. The Assembly has not the dignified appearance and bearing required of its position.

9. **nec color . . .** Neither the complexion of an empire nor the forehead of a senate: a hexameter verse from Lucan's *Pharsalia*, referring to the degeneracy of the Roman senate. Lucan (39-65) was a youth who wrote an epic poem on the wars of Pompey and was one of the victims of the reign of Nero.

**the evil principle.** The active principle of evil, "the power that now worketh in the children of disobedience"; i. e., the devil.

12. **none to construct.** The test of statesmanship is constructive power; these have only destructive power.

**except such machines.** Or, if they can construct, it is only such things as are destructive. 'Machines' is used in the older sense of any mechanism or instrument of power.

Para. 109. *All must feel ashamed: the degradation of the Assembly.*

18. **burlesque.** Used of things made ludicrous by the incongruity of the manner with the matter. Here of the childish action of a great assembly.

19. **sacred institute.** A national representative assembly. Such a body is invested by Burke with a sort of religious awe.

27. **the applauses of . . .** Another scornful allusion to Price and his friends. The reference is to the presentation of their Address to the Assembly which was so readily welcomed.

28. **Miserable King! . . .** An imitation of classical outbursts. The sentences of Exclamation and Interrogation that follow make another of Burke's climaxes.

32. **Un beau jour.** A beautiful day ; the day on which the king and queen were brought to Paris. The expression was used by Bailly, for a time President of the National Assembly and now Mayor of Paris, with reference (it is said) to the king's coming to Paris instead of going with anti-revolutionaries to Metz, and to the comparatively peaceful ending of the day, resistance and bloodshed having been feared. Carlyle says, "the slow moving chaos, or modern Saturnalia of the ancients, reached the Barrier, and must halt to be harangued by Mayor Bailly," and later by others.

34. **that the vessel.** The words were spoken by Mirabeau.

37. **stiff gale.** Strong wind; in accordance with the metaphor of a ship. The treason and murder refer to the attack on the king's palace and the murder of body-guards at Versailles on the morning of the 6th Oct.

38. **Our Preacher's triumph.** The occasion of Price's rejoicing.

Page 86. I. **innocent gentlemen.** Referring to the murder of Foulon and his son-in-law Berthier. Foulon was the author of the remark that the hungry people might "eat grass." He was "whirled across the *Place de Greve* to the Lanterne. . . pleading bitterly for life, to the deaf winds. Only with the third rope—for two ropes broke, and the quavering voice still pleaded—can he be got so much as hanged."

**that the blood.** . . . Burke regards this as adding insult to injury. The remark is attributed to Barnave, a member of the Assembly, at first revolutionary, in the end guillotined. It was said of a trio : "whatsoever these three have in hand, Duport thinks it, Barnave speaks it, Lameth does it."

4. **Complaints of disorders.** The whole country was in confusion. Royalists were continually complaining.

7. **were under the protection.** The words were unreal and empty as there was virtually no law.

8. **address the king.** . . Putting responsibility on a helpless sovereign.

10. **Enslaved.** Because they could not, except at the risk of life, oppose popular feeling.

13. **What must they have felt.** A reference to an address presented to the King and Queen, at the beginning of 1790, by members of the Assembly. Burke admits that the congratulations were made with good-nature. The address styled him 'friend of the people' and anticipated the presentation to him of a collection of laws calculated for the happiness of all the French.

19-20. **adjourned the practical demonstrations.** . . They put off bestowing any actual gifts or benefits or improvement of position.

Para. 110. 23. **This address.** . . A paragraph on manners.

24. **goodnature and affection.** Kindliness. Good-nature was formerly the ordinary term for natural kindliness. The address was presented at the New Year, the season of compliments.

30. **in the frippery.** The term suggests that dress fashions reach England only when they are getting out of date in Paris. Here the words are used metaphorically of conduct. Fr. *friperie* old clothes.

**If so, we.** We have not yet learned the newest fashion (or, cut or style).

35. **the most humiliated.** The king: because his elevation was the greatest.

37. **are derived from.** . . The address spoke of a stormy or tempestuous period. Burke expands these words in his own way.

38. **The attempted assassination.** . . Their lives were in danger when a rush was made on the palaces at Versailles.

39. **Mortification.** Humiliation. Lit. causing to die.

Page 87. I. **our ordinary of Newgate.** Newgate was a famous prison in London. The ordinary is the chaplain. Here reference is made to attendance on a criminal about to be executed. Burke says that a chaplain would not try to console a prisoner by saying to him that his death would be beneficial to the country. Even the criminal's feelings are respected.

3-4. **hang-man liberalised.** Liberalised means up-lifted or ennobled; the result of all professions being pronounced 'honourable.'

6. **rank and arms in the Heralds' College.** The College of heralds regulates matters of rank, precedence, armorial bearings,

&c. The science of heraldry considers all questions of the quartering of escutcheons, of crests or mottoes or insignia of any kind. Burke imagines a new college of the rights of man, which will assign rank and coats-of-arms to the very lowest of occupations.

7. **too generous . . .** He will feel too much of a gentleman to do as your senators have done.

9. **cutting consolation.** To wit, that his humiliation is national good.

10. **leze nation.** The new name of treason instead of the older *leze majesté*; offences being now construed against the nation, not the sovereign. Lat. *laesa* injured.

11. **Executive.** A play on the double meaning, the hangman being an executioner.

Para. III. 13. **A man . . .** Burke's gloomy reflection. This little paragraph is one of the most elaborated in the book.

14. **anodyne draught of oblivion.** This and the parallel phrase, 'opiate potion of amnesty,' combine the ideas of allaying pain and producing forgetfulness. Anodyne (without pain) and amnesty (without remembrance) are from the Greek; oblivion and opiate from the Latin. Here we see that Burke coined two synonymous phrases and could not abandon either of them.

16. **galling wakefulness.** Unresting pain, expressed more powerfully in the next clause. 'Galling' describes the pain of a sore caused by rubbing, as a galling yoke.

17. **corroding.** Eating or consuming. A memory that corrodes (or gnaws and destroys) is like a live or active ulcer.

18-19. **powdered with all . . .** A repetition of the idea in 'drugged' above; but the words "scorn and contempt" are very exaggerated.

20-21. **balm of hurt minds.** Shakespeare's *Macbeth* 2. I., 103, one of several phrases uttered by Macbeth after incurring the guilt of murder.

**the cup.** A biblical metaphor.

Para. II2. 24. **Yielding to . . .** The king for other reasons may forget, but History will not forget these events or this new style of manners.

26. **compliment.** The observation that the riotous events are for the national good, the same as the 'topic of consolation,' the drug, and the powder.

30. **her awful censure.** Burke as a preacher tells us that no crime is without its permanent effect.

32-33. **liberal refinement.** Ironical mockery.

34. **History will record.** Burke goes back to the outrage and records what (as he supposes) happened.

37. **under the pledged security.** . . . The king had received assurances that there would be no disturbance during the remainder of the night. The arrangements were made by Lafayette and D' Estaing.

40. **From this sleep the queen.** . . . In the morning a riot commenced of uncertain origin, but the body-guards fired wounding or killing one or more, and the crowd rose in instant revenge.

41. **Voice of the sentinel.** As told in Carlyle five sentinels rushed shouting save the Queen! Then came a second warning from a body-guard Miomandre, and he was followed by another Tardivet du Repaire who was borne down with pikes. Neither Miomandre nor Repaire was killed, though they were supposed to be.

The queen was able to reach the king's apartment, though the main entrance thereto was already besieged.

Para. II3. *The Procession to Paris and the outrages.*

Page 88. 18. **sanctuary.** Used of a church or place of refuge where even criminals are protected. The term means properly a sacred place.

19. **swimming in . . .** This description is exaggerated although for an hour the excitement was intense.

23. **Two.** Fourteen body-guards were wounded. Two sentry body-guards Deshuttes and Varegny, were massacred, "with a hundred pikes." Their heads were carried round Versailles and then in the procession to Paris.

36. **furies.** In Greek mythology the furies, or Eumenides, were goddesses who pursued the guilty. They were of hideous aspect.

37. **abused shape.** Burke implies that by such conduct the female form is dishonoured. To abuse is to misuse or turn to wrong use.

39. **bitterness of death.** The utmost possible humiliation.

Page 89. 3. **one of the old palaces.** The Tuilleries: built by Catherine de Medici, wife of Henry II, on tilefields; destroyed by the communists 1871. Carlyle says "Medicean Tuilleries how changed since it was a peaceful tilefield! Or is the ground itself fate-stricken, accursed; an Atreus' palace; for that Louvre window is still nigh out of which a Capet, whipt of the Furies, fired his signal of the St. Bartholomew." Here the king remained till his execution in Jan. 1793.

4. **bastile.** Political prison. Political prisoners had been imprisoned in a famous prison called the Bastille (building, or fortress, from Fr. *bastir* now *batir* to build), and the Fall of the Bastille (July 14, 1789) was the first great achievement of the revolutionists,—welcomed by Fox the Whig leader as the greatest and best event of history. Now the tables are so turned that there is (according to Burke) a bastille for kings—only it was a comfortable one.

Para. II4. 5. **Is this a triumph.** . . . A concluding statement on the horror of the scene and Price's blasphemies.

6. **at altars.** In churches. The term is used figuratively, there being no altar in a nonconforming church.

7. **to the divine humanity.** Referring to the quotation regarding the birth of Christ.

9. **Theban and Thracian orgies.** The instruction and procession are compared to the drunken processions and rites in honour of Bacchus or Dionysus the god of wine, in the city of Thebes in Boeotia and the province of Thrace. These places are mentioned as chief centres of this worship. The same comparison is made by Carlyle when he heads a section 'the Menads.'

II. **prophetic enthusiasm.** Probably, enthusiastic hopes for the future, though possibly 'prophetic' may simply refer to the Delphic oracle and the assumption of religious guidance.

13. **saint, apostle.** Ironically used of Price.

14. **revelations of his own.** Hallucinations.

15. **mean superstitions.** Natural affections. Ironical.

18. **Prince of Peace.** A title of Christ, first used in prophecy. *Isaiah IX.* 6. Here used for the effect of Contrast.

19. **in an holy temple** . . . In Jerusalem, by Simeon. Luke II., 25-32.

20. **and not long before.** Luke II., 8-14.

Para. II5. 23. **At first** . . . Burke has been working round to the subject which he is afterwards to discuss most fully, the question of Church Establishments. In this paragraph he asserts that the Chief cause of Price's rapture was the antagonism to bishops that was revealed.

25. **a delicious repast.** . . . A delightful banquet to some tastes.

27. **reflexions.** Such as, perhaps, the Restoration in 1660 after the overthrow of the monarchy in 1649.

34. **Io Paean.** Originally a cry in honour of Apollo, now and here a shout of triumph. The words mean O Healer! Apollo being regarded as a healer.

**animating cry.** Burke's explanation of the preceding phrase; with perhaps an ironical reference to the desire not of life but death.

35. **all the Bishops.** . . . This does not seem to have been a main cry. It was uttered when the king was just entering Paris with two bishops in his carriage.

Page 90. 2. **the precursor.** Defenders of church establishments profess to regard attacks on these institutions as attacks on the persons—which is not usually true. It is probable that there is no ground for the suggestion that Price was influenced by this cry.

3. **Millennium.** Literally a thousand years; used in the book of Revelation of a coming time when the powers of evil will be restrained.

**fifth monarchy.** Another expression of the expectation of a reign of saints or kingdom of God. The phrase was used in the time of the Commonwealth by a sect of Puritans. It is based on the Hebrew Book of Daniel where, after the successive monarchies or empires of Assyria, Persia, Graeco-Macedonia and Rome, a fifth kingdom arises; and “the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom and possess the kingdom for ever.” *Dan.* VII., 18.

4. **destruction.** . . . What is called separation of Church and State.

7. **to exercise the patience.** Burke imagines that the revolutionists were disappointed because more terrible things were not done.

14. **A group.** . . . The metaphor is from painting. Burke supposes that the murder of royal personages and bishops was planned but not carried out. This he compares to a great painting which was sketched in outline but not filled in or finished.

17. **history-piece.** The painting would have been of a historical character, both because the persons belonged to public life, and because the murders would have been memorable in history. The word ‘piece’ used to be in frequent use of any work of art—whether of poetry or drama or painting or music. The family of the Vicar of Wakefield desire to be drawn together in one “large historical family piece”. Any great work is called a masterpiece.

18. **massacre of innocents.** The phrase is used primarily of the killing of children mentioned in the New Testament. *Matthew*

II., 16. Burke finds the same innocence in those endangered in France.

**What hardy pencil.** . . . What future murderers. The metaphor is maintained.

19. **great master.** A term specially used of painters. Thus the painters of the 15th and 16th centuries are styled the old masters.

**from the school.** . . . The term schools is used of the different types that have arisen in different countries or at different times, as the Dutch school, and various Italian schools.

21. **The age has not yet.** . . . Things are not yet ripe. The language is ironical.

24. **another object or two.** . . . **oblivion.** . . More insults and sufferings. The reference is to the New Year's Address which asked the king to "forget" the storms, in view of the national benefits. After several more wrongs it may be proper to kill him.

Page 91, Para. II6. I. **Although.** . . . Burke now moves round to the expression of his own feelings of chivalry.

13. **the descendant.** . . . Marie Antoinette, the queen of France, was the daughter of Maria Theresa of Austria, daughter and heir (by the Pragmatic Sanction) of the emperor Charles VI. She was queen of Bohemia and Hungary, and empress of Germany, and played a great part in European history.

Page 92. 5. **sensibility.** Susceptibility to strong emotion in the contemplation of things. A term of the eighteenth century, akin to the modern meaning of sensitiveness.

Para. II7. 7. **I hear.** . . . Two little paragraphs on the bearing of the king and queen. The king felt more for others than for himself.

15. **transformation.** The term is meant to recall the classic myths of the transformation of men into the shapes of beasts.

17-18. **It derogates.** . . . Burke is apologising for any emotion shown by the sovereign. To derogate is to detract from.

21-22. **which it is not unbecoming.** Because they are put on trial. Usually such persons are exalted above praise or blame.

Para. II8. *This sentence on the Queen contains two climaxes.*

**serene patience.** Serene is expressive of calm and lofty dignity.

33. **a sovereign distinguished.** . . . Maria Theresa. Her courage was proved by her share in the wars from 1740 to 1762.

38. **Roman matron.** The Romans in their early history were supposed to have possessed the highest dignity and heroism and to have placed honour before life. Hence literature is full of references to this typical virtue or valour. A particular case, like that of Lucretia, may be in view.

40-41. **by no ignoble hand.** She will die by her own hand, if unable to defend herself. It was said she carried poison. 'No ignoble' is an emphatic way of saying noble. The figure Litotes.

Next paragraph is the most famous in the book ; and from the literary point of view the defence of chivalry that follows shows Burke at his best.

Page 93. Para. II9. *A reminiscence and a reflection.*

I. **It is now sixteen.** . . . Burke was in Paris in 1774. The queen was born in 1755. The first half of this paragraph is introductory to the exposition or discussion of Chivalry.

3. **dauphiness.** Wife of the dauphin,—dauphin having been the title of the crown prince or heir to the throne of France. Taken from the province of Dauphiny, which was so named from the dolphin crest of the lords thereof. Lat *delphinus*, dolphin.

4-5. **hardly seemed to touch.** Her movement was so sprightly and elastic.

6. **just above the horizon.** Newly entered on public or social life, like a star new risen.

12. **when she added titles.** When she became queen and mother of princes, and proved herself worthy of her position.

13. **to those.** . . . At first she seemed a being to be loved with an enthusiastic though distant love. Now the proper term is veneration.

15. **antidote.** Counteractive; here used of poison itself.

18. **nation of gallant.** . . . Burke is here identifying the aristocracy with the nation, and describing them as they appeared to his imagination in 1773-74.

19. **and of cavaliers.** Cavalier, or chevalier, means knight, but is here used not technically but of men possessing the spirit of knighthood ; and in special relation to readiness to defend the fair sex. Of the same origin as chivalry. Lat. *caballus* a horse.

20. **must have leaped.** Meant to express instantaneous action, as if no soldier needed to await command.

22. **the age of chivalry is gone.** It is here said that one era has just ended and another has commenced. The epoch of chivalry goes back to the latter part of the middle ages, especially

to, the awakening of Europe about the 12th century, and has been marked by noble, generous and heroic sentiment. Now a more selfish and ignoble age has begun.

**23-24. sophisters, economists, calculators.** These terms indicate the mode of thinking and acting that now predominates. The economists are the teachers of political economy, who minutely investigate questions affecting national wealth. Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* appeared in 1776, and before that date there was a school of French economists which produced the statesman Turgot. Burke was doubly annoyed because the principles of Adam Smith were accepted by young Pitt the successful rival of the Whig leaders, who was guided in his new and prosperous finance by Price and similar advisers. By the terms "sophisters, calculators" Burke shows contempt for the less generous type of men which the new utilitarian age is producing. They are sophisters because on abstract principles they assert deceptive theories of liberty and equality and universal rights. Burke held virtually the same economic opinions, but he combined therewith a reverence and tenderness for the past. Economist is from Gr. *oikos* a house, *nomos* administration.

**26. Never, Never.** All that follows in this paragraph is a summary of ideas of chivalry. This sentence enlarges the idea of loyalty.

**27. rank and sex.** High rank (including kings, nobles and feudal superiors), and ladies. The vows of knighthood included reverent regard for, and readiness to defend, woman. Perhaps the classical expression is in Tennyson's Guinevere :

I made them lay their hands in mine and swear  
 To reverence the King as if he were  
 Their conscience, and their conscience as their King,  
 To break the heathen and uphold the Christ,  
 To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,  
 To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,  
 To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,  
 To love one maiden only, cleave to her,  
 And worship her by years of noble deeds,  
 Until they won her ; for indeed I knew  
 Of no more subtle master under heaven  
 Than is the maiden passion for a maid,  
 Not only to keep down the base in man,  
 But teach high thought, and amiable words,  
 And courtliness, and the desire of fame,  
 And love of truth, and all that makes a man.

**28-29. Subordination of the heart.** Cordial (or willing) subordination. The terms subordination and submission are synonymous, and are opposed to the new claim of equality. The epithets generous, proud, dignified and cordial are also to be understood

as virtually the same, though in the first and last there is more indication of chivalrous feeling and in the other two of the self-consciousness arising therefrom.

30. **which kept alive . . . the spirit.** This clause distinguishes freedom which is external from freedom which belongs to the soul or inner life. The latter may exist without the former; and especially if there is a willing homage it can live even under despotism.

31. **Unbought grace of life.** Natural dignity and refinement. In those days beauty and splendour and charm abounded naturally. In the new system all such things are to be paid for.

32. **cheap defence.** Formerly men followed their feudal superior to the field: and regular standing armies were unknown. Now the military expenditure is enormous.

**the nurse of manly. . . .** Chivalry cultivated or nursed the military spirit, and men fought for love of glory or of leaders. Now war is becoming a matter of business rather than of sentiment and adventure.

33. **It is gone, that.** This remarkable inversion is to allow the paragraph to close emphatically with the subject of the sentence. The use of 'it' is not highly elegant. Burke might have written: Gone too is that.

34. **sensibility.** Sensitiveness; liability to keenness or warmth of emotion.

35. **chastity of honour.** Perfect honour, with sensitiveness. By the old code an insult was followed by a challenge.

**a stain like.** A moral stain had pain, like that of a wound.

36. **inspired courage whilst . . .** Simultaneously courage was increased and fierceness diminished. The influence was at once invigorating and refining.

37. **which ennobled. . . .** An adaptation of Johnson's phrase in the epitaph on Goldsmith. "He touched nothing that he did not adorn."

38. **half its evil . . .** The evil of vice was lessened by the requirement of decency and refinement of manners. This clause has been greatly condemned, but Burke means that in consequence of greater refinement of manners the nobility did not show the evil example they otherwise might have done. "Lost half its evil" is not so much a judgment on vice, as on the effects of vice.

Para. 120. *Effects of Chivalry.*

40. **mixed system of . . .** The system is here regarded as

mixed because of its double appeal to the intellectual and emotional nature. On the one side it is a system of law and practice, on the other of the cultivation of lofty feelings. Opinion means, established or prevailing ideas.

Page 94. I. **the ancient chivalry.** Chivalry as an organised system may be called ancient. That is to say, feudalism with its lords and vassals and with knights and squires and pages was in process of breaking down all through the 16th century; and as an established system was no longer in existence. Yet relics of the system remained in France until they were swept away in 1789. The flourishing period of Chivalry was about the 13th and 14th centuries; a time of regal splendour and tournaments and romantic ideas.

**and the principle.** The principle (of loyalty and heroism &c.) continued to assert itself in some form or other through the 16th and 17th and 18th centuries.

9-7. **It is this . . .** The ideas of modern Europe, distinguishing it from ancient Europe, are largely due to the developments of chivalry.

8. **It is this.** In this parallel but more extended sentence Europe is contrasted with Asia and with the ancient classical world (Greece and Rome).

13. **antique.** Ancient. Lat. *antiquus*. In Burke's day more ancient history was unknown. The most *brilliant periods* are those which produced classic works of literature or philosophy or art.

**It was this . . .** It produced amidst all the gradations of the social order a sort of equality due to common affections and aims.

14. **confounding.** The French equality produces confusion. Diversity of rank is a necessity of orderly social life.

16. **It was this opinion.** The fourth parallel sentence enlarges the preceding, as the second did the first. The noble equality is said to have existed between kings and subjects. E.g., the motto *noblesse oblige* (nobility imposes obligations) is a sentiment of those days.

17. **mitigated.** Softened, caused to descend from their lofty heights. The system of loyal reverence created mutual affection, and thus kings found companionship amongst superior men not connected with Government.

19. **Without force. . . .** Quietly and gradually it subdued the insolent pride of the times that preceded it.

21. **soft collar.** Easy yoke, mild restraint. Kings found it to

be to their advantage to recognise the sentiments and judgments of society.

22. **stern authority**. . . . **elegance**. The rise and influence of learning and culture, (or what was called humane literature), is here indicated. At one time kings and nobles despised learning, but out of the chivalrous system a refinement arose which men in authority could not afford to scorn.

23. **a dominating vanquisher**. . . . This clause is badly expressed. It is perhaps parallel to the saying "captive Greece took captive her conquerors." Men who set up dominations or princedoms, vanquishing old laws and imposing new ones, were in turn subdued by the refined and refining manners of their subjects. Some texts read *domination*; dominating is in Bohn's edition.

Para. 121. 25. **But now all**. . . . Three paragraphs follow on the new ideas of equality.

26. **illusions**. Used of things existing in the imagination, but producing beneficial effects through the hopes or ideas created; while delusions have an injurious effect.

27. **liberal**. The opposite of servile.

28. **shades**. Ranks and conditions.

29. **bland assimilation**. Genial adaptation.

**incorporated into politics the**. . . . Introduced into political life the same sentiments of honour and mutual regard as are found to adorn private social life. Governments became objects of personal regard; not of enmity or fear. Political discussion should be conducted without animosity, and with the mutual regard and courtesy of opponents.

32. **of light and reason**. Terms of the revolutionists here described with mocking irony.

33 **decent drapery**. The prudential ideas or customs that invest persons with respectability and honour are compared to the clothing that give grace and comeliness to the human figure.

34. **superadded ideas furnished**. . . . In addition to the illusions and customs of ordinary life are the body of lofty ideas which give man the feeling of self-respect. These, Burke says, are derived from the moral imagination, acknowledged by the heart and approved by the intellect. Here the threefold division of the mind (reason, imagination, and will or emotion) is assumed, and that aspect of the imagination which treats of practical life is described.

39. **exploded as**. . . . Set aside as obsolete.

Page 95. Para. 122. *Every halo will disappear.*

5. **without distinct views.** Homage to woman in general, apart from individual relationships.

6. **romance.** Fanciful or extravagant notions.

7. **Regicide, parricide.** . . . The distinction which makes the murder of a king, or a father, or a religious teacher, more heinous than ordinary homicide is now to be regarded as unreal and due to superstition.

8. **Jurisprudence.** The science of law.

14. **too severe a scrutiny.** Too minute are investigation.

Para. 123. *Laws and manners should be able to appeal to the heart.*

20. **laws are to be supported only.** . . . They are not to have behind them the force of public opinion or of a national conscience. Individuals may think or feel regarding them as they choose Kings will strike terror.

25. **In the groves of . . .** Greek ethics was taught sometimes in gardens, and there the ideas were lofty. In the French schools lofty ideas are not to be found and the ultimate motive is fear. This is compared to a vista or avenue at the extremity of which is a place of execution ; while in the Greek garden or grove the prospect was pleasant. The primary reference is to Plato who taught, in the grove of Academus, an ideal system of thought.

27. **engages the affections on the part of.** Binds the affections to the side (or service) of.

29. **mechanic.** Low ; illiberal. The term mechanic was in Burke's day used rather contemptuously of tradesmen and of the ideas supposed to be suitable to tradesmen. Fitzjames asks if a knight can be supposed to be guided by "such fixed cause as gives the poor mechanic laws," and similar observations are frequent in older literature.

30. **embodied.** Gathered or summed up. In Burke's opinion the king should be the symbol of the nation, and reverence for him should strengthen the patriotic feeling.

34. **the affections.** Veneration, admiration, love, &c.

35. **manners.** Courtesy, good breeding.

36. **as supplements.** As answering situations for which there is no definite law, and as enlarging the sphere of duty.

37. **correctives.** Where the strict letter of the law may not be the best thing in the circumstances, or where its harshness may be wisely mitigated.

**always as aids.** Whatever strengthens good feeling between man and man, and between different classes strengthen law.

40. **Non satis.** It is not enough that poems be beautiful, they should also be sweet. The quotation is from the genial Latin poet Horace, *De arte poetica*,

Page 96. 3. **to relish.** Not merely to approve, but to feel delight in, as in the sweetness and charm of the best poetry.

Para. 124. *Feeble will be succeeded by force.*

5. **But power.** Power will survive as tyranny.

8. **The usurpation.** The new rulers having risen by unscrupulous means will perpetuate their power in unscrupulous methods.

13. **Feeble.** The term is a doublet of fidelity, and means loyal adherence to a feudal superior, to the king as governor or to the nobleman from whom land is held. The epithets 'feudal' and 'chivalrous' describe the legal and social (or moral) aspects respectively. The words that follow speak of the sense of security that existed while this loyal fidelity prevailed.

17. **anticipated by . . .** When rulers have to live in fear (as in anarchical countries) they will be actuated by suspicion, and will have recourse to the preventive measures known to tyrants.

22. **tyrants from policy.** Tyrants deliberately because they will deem oppression the safest policy.

23. **rebels from principle.** Rebels not account of oppression or hardship but from theories of the rights of man. Here Burke condenses his argument into a short balanced antithetic and epigrammatic sentence.

Para. 125. *A prospect of uncertainty.*

24. **when ancient . . .** When long-standing principles give way the future looks dark.

**cannot be indifferent.** Must have considerable effect.

Para. 126. *The double basis.*

37. **We are but too . . .** Burke proceeds to more general reflection.

Page 97. I. **Nothing is more . . .** Our higher civilisation and all its benefits may be traced to two principles (nobleness, and religious faith).

7. **spirit of a gentleman.** This is the spirit and idea expressed or embodied in the forms of knighthood and aristocracy.

The term was usually confined to members of the aristocracy, but it implied also moral and chivalrous qualities, and therefore can be readily extended to all that show themselves worthy of it.

8. **nobility, clergy.** These two classes arise as embodiments of the two principles. Here they are complimented for their services to learning.

9. **the one by profession.** *i. e.*, the clergy, who in the middle ages were the only learned persons.

**by patronage.** Up to about 1700 poets had to depend on patrons. There was no large reading public.

12. **rather in their causes.** In a rudimentary condition, in process of formation.

13. **Learning paid back . . .** These two classes were rewarded by the higher culture they possessed. Personification.

14. **with usury,** With interest; *i. e.*, in an enhanced degree.

16. **Happy if they had all . . .** Learning is now regarded as a third class—the literary and professional men. Such a class hardly existed in the earlier centuries, but in the 18th century philosophers and editors and other writers formed a numerous and powerful body.

20. **aspired to be the master.** This new class has abandoned its proper place and, like rebel angels, has endeavoured to overthrow the ancient civilisation.

**Along with . . .** A prophecy that learning also will suffer from the revolutionary mobs.

23. **under the hoofs.** This is one of the most powerful of metaphors. The prophecy is supposed to have been partially fulfilled in the brutal execution of many of the lights of the revolution; such as Baily, originally an astronomer, shamefully guillotined Nov. 1793, and Condorcet who died in a miserable prison.

Para. 127. 24. **If as I suspect . . .** The injurious effect will extend to all departments of national activity.

**letters.** Literature, as in the phrase “men of letters.”  
Lat. *literae*.

28. **trade.** Industry in general. The term is sometimes used as equivalent to commerce; but it may include mechanical arts.

29. **the goods.** The things worshipped by the economists who consider only how to promote wealth. Cf. ‘idol’ above.

30. **but creatures, but effects.** The result, that is, of ancient culture and manners.

31. **first causes.** The opposite of effect, or creature; a phrase used in the singular to denote the Creator.

33. **the same shade.** The same protection; referring chiefly to the nobility.

34. **protecting principles.** The spirit, as above expressed, of nobility and of religion.

Page 98. I. **sentiment supplies.** High ideas and sentiments may save a poor people from a condition of stupidity and barbarism. That is to say, the ancient manners are more essential than the modern devices of industry.

10. **hereafter.** In a future life.

Para. 128. II. **I wish . . .** Signs of rapid degeneration are already manifest.

15. **is not liberal.** Is not large-minded and tolerant. An oxymoron; as is also the closing sentence of the paragraph.

Para. 129. I9. **It is not clear . . .** The idea of the paragraph is that this revolution derives more seriousness from its bearing on other nations, and from the relation of France to civilisation in general. The chief homes of chivalry were England and France, and perhaps, in the greatest degree, France.

24. **gentis . . .** The cradle of our race. Our manners were largely derived from France.

26. **your fountain . . .** A change of metaphor expressing the same fact that ideas arise in France and thence pass over Europe.

29. **This gives all Europe . . .** The sentiment so far is quite correct. The great error of Burke in subsequent years was to insist on interference with France.

35. **the most important of . . .** The gravest aspect of the French Revolution is not the political but the moral.

Page 99. Para 130. 3. **Why do I . . .** My feelings are natural. Those of Dr. Price are unnatural. A comparison with the tragic drama is suggested.

8-9. **melancholy sentiments upon . . .** Burke passes from the particular to general reflections on great changes in life and history. The words that follow indicate what used to be commonplaces of the preachers, and themes of serious poetry.

13-14. **passions instruct our reason.** Cf. below "alarmed into reflection." Strong emotions of pity or terror rouse our minds and compel us to think,

15-16. **this great drama.** Human life. A metaphor frequent in Shakespeare. The Gr. term *drama* meant action.

18. **disasters in the moral . . .** These unexpected calamities surprise us as a miracle would.

21-22. **purified by terror and pity.** These famous words are derived from Aristotle's definition or explanation of Tragedy. Aristotle's meaning has been much disputed, and it is probable that Burke misunderstood him. The words are explained by Milton in the preface to his *Samson*. Aristotle does not say that the mind is purified by pity and terror, but that these passions themselves are purged by the exhibitions of the stage. In other words men are delivered from vague and stupid surprise and terror by the poet's elaborate expositions of moral law and divine government.

27. **theatric sense of painted distress.** The distress represented in a tragedy (or work of fiction) is 'painted' i.e., fictitious or created by art, and the sense of the on-looker which makes him weep is "superficial and theatric," not therefore profound and genuine. It would be shameful to weep in the theatre and not to be affected when the distress is actually realised in the overthrow of the great.

29. **With such. . .** If I had so unnatural a mind as to weep at fictitious and rejoice at real sorrow I would not attend the representation of a tragedy.

32. **Garrick.** David Garrick (1717-79), the most famous of British actors, was a personal friend of Burke and Johnson, and a member of the Club.

**Siddons.** Sarah Kemble, Mrs. Siddons (1753-1831), perhaps the greatest of tragic actresses.

33. **not long since.** Not long ago. A rather obsolete use of since.

35. **of folly.** Because of the extreme inconsistency.

Para. 131. 36. **Indeed the theatre.** This paragraph also contrasts the new feelings and methods with what is natural.

37. **moral sentiments.** A phrase of the moral philosophers. E.g., Adam Smith wrote a Theory of Moral Sentiments.

41. **must apply themselves.** Must speak direct to the human heart and conscience. The heart, according to Burke, is morally constituted, or is moral by nature.

Page 100. 5. **Machiavellian policy.** Weighing good and evil, and calculating the advantages.

7. **monarchical or democratic tyranny.** The tyranny whether of a single ruler or of many. The point is that the new revolutionists are in reality tyrannical.

9. **even the hypothetical.** . . . On the ancient Greek stage the audience once refused to listen to hypothetical (*i. e.*, conditional) Machiavellianism. A *personated* tyrant is a tyrant who is not a real person but only one of the *dramatis personae*.

According to Payne Burke is referring to a passage in Euripides' tragedy, the *Phoenicians*, where Eteocles says "If injustice may be permitted it is most honourable when committed in order to gain power." But Burke seems to be wrong in thinking that this was the occasion which produced an outburst of disapproval.

15. **a principal actor weighing.** . . . A metaphorical and powerful description of the new utilitarian ethics. The reference is probably to Mirabeau. See above.

18. **contingent advantage.** Probable future benefit.

22. **ledger.** As in book-keeping where the two sides show the debit and credit accounts.

24. **still in debt.** . . . Not yet equal, in guilt and crime, to the older tyranny but quite willing to make up.

26. **intuitive glance.** Two schools of philosophy refer moral judgments to intuition of what is right, and to calculation of consequences, respectively. Burke considers intuition a natural thing and therefore readily exercised on the stage. The French utilitarians calculate in an unnatural way. Intuitive means beholding.

35. **are soon preferred.** The downward course is rapid. What was hesitatingly adopted is soon carried out without compunction.

**a shorter cut.** Explained in next sentence. The method of virtuous action does not suddenly attain the desired result.

40. **the pretext.** The sentence shows how men deceive themselves when ambitions are roused.

Page 101. I. **statiate their insatiable.** One of the many epigrams, or oxymorons, by which Burke strengthens his statements.

Para. 132. 6. **But the reverend.** . . . A paragraph on the character of the French king.

8. **arbitrary.** Burke points out that whatever fault is here indicated belonged to the system into which the king was born, and not to the individual monarch. His prerogatives were inherited, not usurped.

18. **indiscretion.** Unwise mistake.

20. **a series of concessions.** These words are correct. From the date of Turgot as Comptroller General change after change was introduced in the hope of improving the state of the country.

22-23. **call his people to a share.** The reference is to the creation of provincial assemblies alongside of the administrative officers in the country.

27. **once thought it necessary.** A reference probably to the arrival at Versailles on 23rd September of a Regiment (*de Flandre*) by which the king's defences were doubled. This and the talk of flight to Metz led to the riot of October 5th, 6th.

34. **I tremble. . . .** In these two parallel sentences Burke says that the greatest danger is not to monarchs but to the people.

39. **fashion.** Type.

41. **keep firm. . . .** Strong kings who forbid the approach of interference. The metaphor is from riding.

Page 102. 2. **awakened vigilance.** Strength of expression is sought by tautology.

5. **they never elevate.** Those who readily criticise a benignant king and government are silent before a stern government.

6. **listed.** Enlisted. Both phrases express the idea of unscrupulous adventure.

7. **any good in. . . .** Burke is describing men who are without sympathy and without patriotism. In their meanness they insult the sufferer and salute the tyrant.

Para. 133. *On real tyrants.*

9. **If it could. . . .** There are cases when monarchs should be put on trial: but it should be done with dignity.

21. **consolatory to the human mind.** Payne quotes from Milton, *Samson Agonistes* 1268.

O how comely it is and how reviving,  
To the spirits of just men long oppressed,  
When God into the hands of their deliverer  
Puts invincible might.

23. **the dignity.** The requisite dignity. The expression as it stands is inelegant.

24. **Justice is grave.** Personification. The administration of justice should be accompanied by forms of pomp and dignity.

27. **Nero.** Roman Emperor, 54-68 A. D.

**Agrippina.** Mother of Nero, whom Nero caused to be murdered.

**Louis the Eleventh.** Of France, 1461-83; by whom the nobility were broken down.

28. **Charles the Ninth.** Of France, 1550-1574. Involved in the massacre of St. Bartholomew 1572.

29. **Charles the Twelfth of Sweden.** 1682-1718; 1707 murdered Patkul who had presented a petition of grievances to the former sovereign, and had thereafter for a time found refuge abroad.

30. **Christina.** (1662-1689). Queen of Sweden; daughter of Gustavus Adolphus.

31. **Monaldeschi.** A former favourite of the Queen; killed out of revenge for betraying confidences. 1656.

Para. 134. 34. **If the French.** . . . The inconsistency of the action of the French.

35. **King of the French.** The new title given to the king by the National Assembly; 4th, August 1789; intended to define his duties with regard to the people.

41. **subordinate executory trust.** This is Burke's conception of the new status of the king. The point is discussed later.

Page 103. 5. **deposed tyrant.** The words are hypothetical. The adjective is Burke's exaggeration, and the substantive is the exaggeration of the revolutionists.

13. **flagrant breach of trust.** If the accusations are true they should not have appointed the king to any duties. For any public body to appoint an unworthy servant is a breach of the trust committed to them. Burke is here, in his circuitous way, moving round to the matter of personal slander.

**the only crime in . . .** The language is obscure but the meaning seems to be that if any actual evil had been known against the king they would have acted consistently enough in making it a ground of impeachment.

Para. 135. *Our better manners.*

21. **generous enemies.** England and France had been frequently at war during the preceding century, so much so that Fox styled France "our natural enemy". Nevertheless we are generous and decline to listen to slanders.

24. **anecdotes.** Stories of the French court.

**with the attestation . . .** On the evidence of French officials. "On their shoulder" may refer literally to those that bring the stories, or figuratively to the anecdotes. The *flower-de-luce* (or *fleur-de-lys*) was the emblem of the French Monarchy. It is disputed whether the symbol was originally a lily. This shape was worn on the shoulder as a badge by officials of the court.

**26. Lord George Gordon.** One of the slanderers of the French queen. He was sentenced to five years' imprisonment in 1788 and died in Newgate prison 1793. Burke, wishing to pour contempt on this fanatic, refers to his having become a convert to the Jewish religion, and to his having at an earlier stage headed riots against the Catholic church. In 1780 there was great excitement on account of proposed measures for removing Catholic disabilities.

**27. proselyte.** Convert. In ancient times the term was used of Greeks and others who joined in the Jewish worship. Of such there were great numbers throughout the Roman Empire.

**29. a mob (excuse the term . . .)** In France the mob is now regarded as the Nation or People; but in England it is still a term of contempt.

**37. spiritual.** Afford leisure for spiritual meditation: an inappropriate sarcasm.

**38. noble.** Because of noble birth. 'Lord' prefixed to the first name is the courtesy title of the son of a Duke (or Marquis).

**39. Talmud.** The Talmud is the book which contains the Hebrew laws, traditions and expositions.

**Page 104. 3. your new Hebrew brethren.** A sneer at the Jewish money-lenders whose help is sought by the National Assembly.

**5. old hoards of the Synagogue.** Money hoarded in the Jewish church: the term 'Synagogue' being used for the whole Jewish body on its religious side.

**6. very small poundage.** Small rate per pound.

**7. thirty Pieces of silver.** The sum of money paid to the traitor Judas. *Matthew, xxvi 15.*

**8. what miracles . . .** Increase at compound interest would in the course of centuries be enormous. Burke should have said 1760. But the passage is too coarse to be worthy of study.

**12. Archbishop of Paris.** The head of the Catholic religion in Paris. Such men will be hospitably received in England.

13. **protestant Rabbin.** The phrase is contradictory but marks Lord G. Gordon's two stages. Rabbin, or more usually Rabbi, is the title of an expounder of the Jewish law.

16. **the fund.** The money at his disposal for religious purposes. In England it will not be confiscated.

Para. 136. *The French are apt to misunderstand the English.*

23. **I think the honour . . .** It is necessary to disclaim Dr. Price and friends because by such men foreigners are deceived.

26. **proxy.** Authority to speak (or act) for him. A contraction of procurator.

Page 105. I. **dyke.** Here used of the English channel. The term is ordinarily used either of a channel dug, or of the barrier made by casting up earth, or of a wall built as a fence. The same word as ditch.

5. **I suspect . . .** The French misconceptions are to be traced to noisy misleaders.

18. **Because half a dozen grass-hoppers . . .** A famous and effective simile. The grasshoppers represent such men as Price, the great cattle represent the general population.

22. **British oak.** The oak, then used as the material of great ships, is often referred to as the characteristic British tree. Milton calls it 'monumental'; here it suggests protection; especially the sense of safety due to naval supremacy. Burke again uses the figure, in a later work, with the simple idea of shelter.

Para. 137. 32. **If the king . . .** If the French king were our prisoner in a time of bitter war we should treat him with respect. The paragraph repeats the assertion that the English still have natural and noble feelings.

38. **We formerly . . .** Referring to the capture of the French king John II, called the Good, after the battle of Poictiers in the reign of Edward III (1336).

Page 106. 3. **Thanks to . . .** In consequence of. Burke takes occasion to say that a conservative disposition is favourable to the preservation of ideas of honour.

8-9. **subtilized ourselves into savages.** Brought ourselves into the condition of savages by subtle sophistic argument regarding the state of nature and the evils of civilisation.

10. **Rousseau.** Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) a sentimental writer who more than any other prepared for the revolution; author of the *Social Contract* and other works (*Julie*, a novel; *Emile*, on Education; *Confessions*, &c.)

II. **Voltaire.** (1694-1778) A brilliant writer and satirist, often irreligious; author of seventy volumes, including histories.

**Helvetius.** (1715-1771) A philosophic writer who traced all progress to self-interest.

13. **madmen.** Referring to Rousseau.

14. **We know that we . . .** Ideas of morals, government and liberty were as developed in the ancient world as now. By this sentence Burke discounts the value of all the political writings of the eighteenth century. But, even if Burke's opinion is true, each generation has to think out such questions afresh.

21. **imposed its law.** Of eternal silence.

23. **embowelled.** Disembowelled. The association of the entrails with the emotional nature comes into English literature from the Bible, where such expressions as "bowels of compassion" are frequent.

25. **inbred sentiments.** Sentiments which belong to our nature and are developed in us from childhood. These are here said to be the guardians or reminders of duty and the strengtheners of what is manly and superior in our code of morals.

Wordsworth's poetry is full of reminiscences of this book. We may here recall from the *Immortality Ode* the passage where the "first affections" are said to be the master-light of all our seeing.

28-29. **drawn and trussed.** The comparison is to a dead bird which has been disembowelled in order to be stuffed for preservation in a museum. Truss (Fr. trousser a bundle) is used in various applications with the general idea of tightening. To draw and truss here describes the process of disembowelling and putting into shape.

31. **blurred shreds of paper.** A contemptuous reference to the theories and declarations regarding natural rights. The declarations are shreds and blurred, that is, they are fragmentary and full of error.

33. **native.** In their inborn and inbred condition.

**unsophisticated by . . .** Not led into error by affected and misguided learning, or by irreligion.

34. **Pedantry** is the vain show of learning without critical judgment.

**We have real . . .** We are true men.

· Page 107. 2. **natural.** In accordance with uncorrupted nature. What follows is a strong statement of the degradation consequent on the cherishing of ignoble and irreverent feelings.

Para. 138. II. You see Sir . . . A paragraph on the value of prejudices.

13. **untaught.** The same as natural, native, inborn, inbred: placed in contrast to "enlightened," or 'sophisticated.'

17. **because they are prejudices.** Burke's language here is slightly paradoxical. He means that prejudices (or prejudices) are often right, and that when they have been able to last long there is a presumption that they are true or serviceable.

20. **We are afraid . . .** We distrust individual judgments. Burke is arguing in behalf of authority, or recognised opinion.

20. **live and trade on . . .** Reason or intelligence is compared to wealth. What the individual possesses is insignificant in comparison with the possessions of the race. Such possession may be compared to the capital without which industries cannot be organised.

28. **latent wisdom.** There is an element of truth in whatever has been long cherished by intelligent men. Latent means concealed, or beneath the surface.

31. **reason involved.** The reason wrapt up inside. The hidden reason surrounded by the prejudice is preferable to the naked, or purely theoretic, reason. Prejudice includes shell and kernel. In next clause it is stated that the prejudice contains, or is connected with, motives and affections.

Page 108. I. **of ready application . . .** The man who has prejudices or formed habits of thought does not stand wondering what to do when a crisis arrives. The main outlines of the courses of duty and wisdom are familiar to him.

7. **his habit.** A chief aim in the training of the mind should be the formation of virtuous habits, so that each act of duty should not be a separate study and decision but should flow naturally from the formed character. Burke says that this end is secured by prejudice, which gives a sort of moral unity to a man's life.

Para. 139. IO. **Your literary men . . .** The revolutionists have no regard for the wisdom of the past or for considerations of permanence. They expect a succession of new discoveries.

II. **the enlightened.** The ironical description of Price and Co.

14. **pay it off . . .** Make up by self-conceit.

26. **establishments.** Established institutions, such as the House of Lords, and the established Church as it is maintained by the State.

32. **singular species of compact.** All compacts or covenants have mutual obligations. Price thinks of one aspect only. Burke has already argued that the people are pledged to support the king.

35. **the majesty of the people.** A new phrase of the revolution; transferring sovereignty to the people.

37. **Their attachment . . .** They have no patriotism apart from their selfish ends.

Page 109. Para. I40. **I. doctrines or rather.** They are not worthy of the name of 'doctrines,' which implies a reasoned system.

Para. I41. 5. **I hear.** Burke now denies that the theories or practices seen in France can be traced to England, or are approved by many in England; or will be followed.

10. **or in the spirit.** As regards purpose, motives, ends, temper, &c.

14. **cabals.** Cliques. From cabala, Jewish mystic teaching.

**the event.** The result. This sentence should be studied for periodic structure.

28. **in remote ages.** In the I2th, I3th, I4th centuries when the papacy controlled Europe, England, though Catholic, refused to submit to dictation from Rome.

**infallibility.** Infallibility was not made a dogma till recently, about 1870, but some such claim was always made. It applies only to official utterances.

30. **dogmatism.** Confident assertion.

32. **anathema.** Curse: the power of excommunication. Gr.

**crusade.** Referring to the power that the popes had of stirring up the people against their rulers. The term was originally used of the expeditions to recover the holy land. So named from the banner of the Cross. Lat. *crux*.

33. **libel and lamp-iron.** The modern weapons of slander and murder.

Para. I42. 35. **formerly . . .** This paragraph gives plausible reasons for active self-protection.

39. **as Englishmen.** In our own defence.

41. **are made a part . . .** Seriously affect us.

Page 110. 2. **panacea.** A cure for all ills. Gr. This is what the revolutionists thought. Burke on the other hand thought the new method a plague.

6. **quarantine.** So as to prevent entrance into England: a term of shipping. Originally forty days, the period of a ship's detention in the harbour when infectious disease is on board.

Para. 143. *We too have had sceptics but they were not a cabal and they are in oblivion.*

8. **a cabal calling itself philosophic.** A clique of sceptics takes credit for what has been done in France and is at the bottom of the whole.

12. **I have heard . . .** We have never had such a thing in England.

14. **It is not . . . is it?** This homely manner is assumed for emphasis or energy.

18. **of that description.** The men quoted were not atheists or infidels though the tendency of their writings was destructive. They flourished at the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century, and are known as the Deists. Collins (1676-1729) attacked prophecy; Toland (1670-1720) was a pantheist, author of *Christianity not mysterious*; Tindal (1656-1733) attacked the idea of revelation; Chubb (1679-1747) wrote numerous tracts, chiefly on ethical questions; Morgan who died in 1743 wrote on the Old Testament. These writers raised many questions but they were met by more learned and effective answers, and they were soon forgotten.

24. **Free-thinkers.** One of the names used of 18th century rationalists. Collins' first work was entitled *A Discourse on Free-thinking* 1713.

25. **Bolingbroke** (1678-1751) is best known as a statesman and writer on history. He was secretary of state in the last years of Anne, but as he was involved in intrigue with the banished Stuarts his career ended with the death of that sovereign. For several years he was in banishment, but in 1723 he was permitted to settle in England; and although he had subsequently to withdraw it was only for a time. He used his pen to aid the opposition to Walpole, and his works on the idea of a Patriot King set forth a political theory which was often made use of against the Whigs. His deistic writings are forgotten. He is said to have supplied to Pope the ideas of the *Essay on Man*.

Burke's earliest writings had reference to Bolingbroke.

26. **the booksellers.** Because the books were found unsaleable.

28. **their few successors.** The less important works of to-day to the same effect.

29. **all the Capulets.** Quoted from Shakespeare. The tragedy of Romeo and Juliet arose out of the antagonism of the Montagu and Capulet families to which they respectively belonged.

31. **unconnected individuals.** Not a continuous and connected school of thought. *Gregarious* means forming a flock. Burke is perhaps remembering the passage in *Samson Agonistes*, 293, where Milton, referring to the history of philosophy, describes the atheist as obscure and isolated,

For of such doctrine never was there school,  
But the heart of the fool,  
And no man therein doctor but himself.

33. **They never acted.** The Deists in England were isolated thinkers and they took no part in politics.

37. **Whether they ought . . .** The question is suggested whether this French cabal should be tolerated.

Page. III. 3. **The whole.** In England everything has been done under religious sanction. That has been due to the character both of the nation and of its leaders.

Para. 144. 130. **We know.** Burke now asserts that Religion is the basis of society. A footnote from Cicero asserts that the gods are the rulers of all things, and the judges of human conduct, and that the mind imbued with such truths will adhere to the useful and the true.

17. **no rust of. . .** Extreme superstition is preferable to irreligion.

22. **enemy to the substance.** Atheists are enemies to the essential elements of religion, and therefore should have nothing to do with the reformation of it.

26. **elucidation.** Exposition in creeds or confessions.

28. **our temple.** Metaphor for, our religion.

32. **adulterated establishment.** False and corrupt modes of reasoning.

33. **ecclesiastical establishment.** . . . Referring not to teaching but to rearrangement of administration and consequent financial readjustment.

34. **avarice or rapacity.** Plunderers. It is insinuated that such men have handled the question in France.

35. **audit.** Verification of accounts.

Page 112. I. **the Greek.** The form of Christianity in Eastern Europe (Greece, Russia, Turkey).

2. **the Armenian.** Perhaps what is called the Syrian Church.

3. **the Roman.** The system maintained in Italy, Spain, Austria, France &c., called Catholic.

6. **it has more.** It is truer to the original.

Para. 145. *The loss of true religion would be followed by false superstition.*

9. **a religious animal.** Religion is an essential part of man's nature, and it distinguishes him from lower animals. Some form of religion is necessary.

13. **in a drunken.** . . . In a fit of madness due to intoxication caused by the French doctrines.

**hot spirit,** such as alcohol.

14. **alembic.** The vessel in which the liquor is distilled. From the Arabic.

15. **we should uncover.** . . . If we cast aside our Christian faith and hope we would be miserable creatures.

20. **are apprehensive.** . . . We fear that some thing very much lower would take its place.

21. **not endure a void.** The phrase is analogous to the old saying that "nature abhors a vacuum."

**some uncouth.** . . . This prophecy was fulfilled when the French set up a woman as goddess of reason.

Para. 146. 25. **our establishment.** Our form of religion by law established and endowed ; the reference being to the legal institution, with public position and endowments.

26. **estimation.** Being esteemed. Burke refers to the high position of bishops and other dignitaries.

29. **we desire that some.** . . . We wish something better to be shown to us. The alternative system is called Voluntaryism. Burke challenges an explicit avowal of policy.

Para. 147. 36. **We are resolved.** . . . By the four establishments here indicated Burke means (1) the Church, (2) the Sovereign, (3) the Nobility, or House of Lords, and (4) the Commons. These are proposed for discussion in the following or middle part of the book.

36. **aristocracy.** Literally, Government by the best, here used of the body which chiefly represents the highest classes.

**democracy.** Literally, government by the people; absurdly used of the unreformed House of Commons.

39. **each in the degree.** . . Burke here announces his opposition to schemes which would increase the power and influence of the Commons above that of the Lords.

Page II3. Para. 148. **For this reason.** Burke explains why he proposes to write an exposition of the four establishments. He regrets the necessity of discussion.

15. **sent commissioners.** In the early history of Rome Commissioners were sent to Greece to ascertain the laws of Solon and to study the constitutions of the leading Greek cities (or states).

The intention stated in these two paragraphs is not fulfilled. Burke says almost nothing of the English monarchy, or lords, or commons. The French monarchy and nobility are to some extent discussed. The question of the Church is more fully handled.

## PART II.

### ON FUNDAMENTAL INSTITUTIONS.

Burke proposed to discuss the four great establishments, both in idea and by a comparison of France and England. The design is imperfectly executed. What we have may be divided thus :

#### I. The Church.

Sect. 1. The Church establishment in England. Para. 149 169.

Sect. 2. The treatment of the Church in France. Para. 170-207.

This point is again taken up when he discusses the French clergy, and once more when, towards the close, the Financial system is examined.

II. On Monarchy and Democracy ; with an examination of the effects of the monarchy in France, and a condemnation of the destroyers. Para. 208-222.

III. On the French nobility. Para. 223-231.

IV. On the French clergy. Para. 232-264.

Para. 149. *Church establishment a consecration of the State.*

18. **establishment.** Public maintenance and endowment, as distinguished from independent organisation and voluntary support. This establishment is a Protestant church, differing from other Protestant churches in having episcopal government. Its constitution was finally settled in 1662. What Burke here supports is the principle of national or state recognition and maintenance.

23. **that religious system.** Protestant Christianity.

25. **early received.** . . . The reference here is to pre-Christian institutions or actions. Men have instinctively given to states a religious consecration.

26. **like a wise architect.** An ancient metaphor. Thus in the New Testament the Christian Church is compared to a temple.

**like a provident proprietor.** Like a foreseeing owner.

30. **purged from.** . . . The words express the moral idea and ideal of the nation.

33. **all that officiate,** All that hold public office ; statesmen, magistrates, public servants. The term officiate is chiefly used of clergymen, and the idea of the sanctity of public service is thus kept up.

37. **function.** Public duty.

Page 114. I. **destination.** This term, and the next clause, refer, in our opinion, to belief in a future life.

3. **paltry pelf.** Salary.

5. **permanent existence.** . . . Spiritual existence after death.

6. **permanent fame.** *I.e.*, in this world. The fame they should seek should not be mere praise but a continued influence due to a high example.

Para. 150. *Every help is needed for the making of man.*

13. **moral, civil, politic.** Probably the three terms are applicable to the Church, and in a lesser degree to educational institutions and beneficent societies. Politic means what is expedient or beneficial for the nation. The words are deliberately general, and include every institution that enlarges and benefits the mind of man.

14. **rational and natural ties.** Ties due either to reason or to inborn nature, referring respectively to ‘understanding’ and ‘affections.’ These natural endowments enable man to connect himself with God.

18. **prerogative.** Distinctive power and right.

21. **no trivial place.** A high place in that creation which rises from the lower animals and ascends, in a rising scale of rational and angelic beings, up to God.

22. **whenever man.** . . . They that govern should be made as perfect as possible. The establishment exists primarily for them.

Para. 151. *The establishment exists also to impress with religious awe all who have a voice of public affairs.*

29. **free citizens.** Those that possess the franchise.

33. **in such societies.** In the eighteenth century there were many countries or communities where the people had no voice in politics. Burke regarded the exclusion of uneducated classes as proper.

39. **act in trust.** The franchise was in Burke's opinion not a right, but a special and solemn trust involving responsibility to God.

Page 115. Para. 152. *Lessons for democracies.*

5. **collective sovereignty.** Where the sovereignty or supreme power is vested in a large body, as in a republic or democracy. The National Assembly assumed sovereignty. According to Rousseau only the entire people should have sovereign power.

6. **single princes.** Kings or Emperors. Prince means foremost man. *Princeps* was the civil title of the Roman Emperors. Burke proceeds to argue that princes, being unable personally to carry out their policy, and having to employ others, soon realise difficulties and responsibilities, while democracies do not.

13. **covered . . . by positive laws.** Protected by definite enactments. Even then there may be revolution or murder.

17. **janissaries.** Guards. The term was applied to a body of foot-guards kept by the sultans of Turkey down to 1826. The term is appropriate because they proved troublesome and dangerous. The term is Turkish and means, new soldiers.

19. **sold by his soldiers.** Burke implies that the soldiers betrayed their sovereign in consequence of, or in return for, an increase of pay by the Assembly. This charge is not considered just. The soldiers shared the revolutionary ideas and fervour. The increase of pay was intended from the beginning. The occasion referred to was the dismissal of the then popular minister, Necker, July 11th 1789, who was reappointed five days later.

21. **absolute.** When there is no check of any second chamber, and no permanent power to overrule.

25. **nearer to their objects.** There are fewer intermediate agents.

28. **sense of fame.** This can be felt only by individuals or small bodies. Estimation=esteem.

32. **in the inverse ratio.** If a crime is committed by five hundred each will apply to himself, or be charged with, only one five-hundredth of the guilt.

36. **A perfect democracy.** Where the will of the people is absolute. The phrase most properly describes a very small state in which each citizen is a member of the governing assembly. Under modern conditions it means a state governed entirely by a representative assembly.

**the most shameless.** Not the most wicked, but the least affected with a sense of shame.

Page 116. 6. **that their will.** They must be emphatically impressed, by religious teachers, with a sense of the fallibility of their will and of regard for the Divine standard of right.

II. **that therefore they are not . . .** This middle part of the sentence is clumsy. It is sufficiently expressed thus: they are not under a false show of liberty . . . tyrannically to exact from those who officiate in the state . . . an abject submission to their occasional will.

13. **inverted domination.** Usually the one, or the few, dominate the many; here the many may dominate the few officials.

17. **occasional will.** Not permanent policy but temporary moods or humours.

**extinguishing . . .** The effect of such domination would be to lower the character of officials.

22. **prey to the servile ambition.** Communities or assemblies which depart from moral principles are easily deceived and misguided by plebeian demagogues or high-born flatterers.

Para. 153. *The people, when purified in will, will appoint public servants as to great and sacred office.*

29. **higher link of the order . . .** Power is delegated. Burke supposes that there is a chain of delegation, the power being passed from one body to another until the fit person is reached. The words here may mean that the people as a whole are nearer to the source of power than any class or individual (as nobles, monarch, minister); or they may suggest that a country fit for democratic government is more civilised and nearer, to the Divine idea.

31. **that eternal immutable. . .** Right is an absolute principle to which both reason (which judges what is true) and will (which controls desire) must correspond. Some ethical

writers of the 18th century, including Clarke and Price, identified the moral sense with reason. Milton says "reason also is choice."

Page 117. 3. **predominant proportion.** No men are perfect, but in the best the qualities of active wisdom predominate and rule.

5. **fitted to the charge.** Adapted to the special work or office.

Para. 154. *When the people are permanently convinced that God requires the good they will then prevent overbearing manners and conduct in their servants.*

Para. 155. *Consecration is required to prevent reckless change.*

17. **temporary possessors and life-renters.** The existing generation.

22. **cut off the entail.** Cancel the obligation to hand on to descendants. 'Entail' is a term of law applied to estates which cannot be alienated from the direct succession.

31. **unprincipled facility of changing.** . . . Proneness to change according to wish or fancy, and without regard to permanent principles.

33. **chain and.** . . . The historic continuity, and therefore the national unity.

Para. 156. *A succession of evil effects.*

38. **the science of.** . . . A notable description of the science of Law.

41. **collected reason of ages.** The science is not the creation of any school of thinkers of one country or age, but is a harmony of the principles and laws which the course of human history has shown to be right and expedient.

Page 118. 8. **the tribunal.** The place for the administration of justice.

9. **hope and fear.** Reward and punishment.

12. **exercising function.** Holding employment. There would be no certainty as regards careers in life.

15. **future establishment.** Settlement in an honourable service or position.

16. **principles.** Fixed and fundamental laws or methods.

24. **a poor creature.** So esteemed because not fitted to the actual world, and not conscious of its standards.

30. **its coin.** What it esteems as valuable. If there is no fixed law of honour there can be no keen cultivation of the sense of honour.

38. **dust and powder.** Material without cohesion. Society would cease to exist.

Para. 157. *Consecration produces filial veneration.*

41. **inconstancy and versatility.** The same as "unprincipled facility of changing." Versatility is now generally used in the good sense of variety and adaptability.

Page 119. I. **obstinacy and the blindest.** . . . The faults at the other extreme. Burke who is here laying down the philosophy of conservatism considers this extreme much less dangerous.

II. **hack that aged parent** . . . The State is as a parent, to be treated with filial reverence. Burke's image is derived from a Greek legend. Medea the wife of Jason was a sorceress, and directed the daughters of Pelias, king of Thessaly, to cut their old father in pieces in order that by incantations over the boiling caldron he might be restored to youthful vigour.

Para. 158. *The primeval contract and the divine law.*

17. **Indeed a contract.** The word 'indeed' (equal to, it is true) is inserted to indicate that the description is not original and is familiar. This paragraph restates the ideas of para. 54, 55. See also on Rousseau.

26. **not a partnership.** . . . Burke shows that the shallow conception of a business partnership is entirely inadequate. The state exists for all purposes of mind and character and life.

36. **each contract.** An individual nation is but a part of the whole at anytime; while the whole present world is but a part in time.

38. **great primeval contract.** This is something prior to human history, and inclusive of all its ultimate developments. The world in its whole history is regarded as a unity which is the unfolding of God's sovereign will. The conception is allied to the doctrine of predestination.

41. **compact sanctioned by the inviolable oath** . . . The whole harmony of the universe is here indicated. It is a compact because the law imposed has to be fulfilled by the creatures. It is inviolable because it is divinely decreed. The term 'oath' is thus used in the Bible. "God because He could swear by no greater swear by Himself." *Hebrews*, vi., 13-18.

Page 120. I. **physical** . . . **natures.** Material creations, stars, plants, minerals, &c.

2. **moral natures.** Men, angels, &c

6. **municipal corporations.** Nations, or national assemblies ; they being but small parts of mankind.

9. **contingent.** Possible. The term means, dependent on circumstances or events.

10. **the bands of their.** The constitution, or system of government, by which hitherto the national unity has been maintained.

13. **chaos of elementary principles.** What would be produced if an existing constitution is destroyed in order to allow a new beginning. The elements would exist, but in a state of chaos or confusion.

13. **but chooses.** Lays down the condition that has to be accepted.

**anarchy.** The same as the chaos of last sentence.

**no exception.** Part of the Divine provision for an extreme occasion.

22. **But if that . . .** If men freely and fancifully choose a resort to anarchy they violate nature, and will soon find themselves in a world of madness and sorrow.

Para. 159. *Society being instituted for man's perfection, corporate worship is required in noble forms, and so as to exalt men. This is done through an established church.*

Page 121. 2. **quod illi...** That to that chief and almighty God, who rules all this world, none of the things that are done on earth is more acceptable than the assemblies and gatherings rightly bound in alliance which are called states.

7. **head and heart.** Approved by intellect and confirmed by affection.

**great name . . . greater.** The greater is Cicero who is the author of the sentence. He puts it into the mouth of Scipio the conqueror of Hannibal.

II. **the common nature.** Humanity of which the reason, feeling and instinct are always the same.

12. **common relation.** The same as 'reference' in next sentence. All men are in the same relation of obligation and responsibility to God.

14. **the point of reference.** The Divine will.

17. **or as congregated.** Individuals met together as in an ordinary meeting. God should be remembered both in private and in public. The term congregation is used of persons met for united worship.

19. **and cast.** Perhaps in the sense of mould, referring to the biblical doctrine that man was made in the image of God.

20. **in their corporate character.** When men meet as national representatives (such as the estates of a realm are intended to be), or in public meetings associated with national functions. Thus there are occasions of national celebration or thanksgiving. In such forms man should render homage to God, the author of corporate and social life.

22. **without which civil society . . .** Burke often repeats this statement that society or civil life is necessary to man's perfection. The instincts of benevolence and the completeness of man's intellectual and moral nature cannot be called forth without social experience and obligation. The statement was due to the wild talk of reversion to natural savagery. See on Rousseau.

31. **original archetype.** The primary pattern and perfect model; that is, God, whose will is the absolute standard of right.

33. **law of laws.** The law to which all laws owe their binding character. Cf. in Bacon: as Aristotle saith aptly and elegantly "that the hand is the instrument of instruments and the mind is the form of forms," so these (logic and rhetoric) be truly said to be the art of arts.

34. **corporate fealty and homage.** National acknowledgment and adoration. The language is transferred from that of feudal obedience, and devotion.

36. **seigniory paramount.** Overlordship. Cf. "King of Kings and Lord of Lords." I *Timothy* vi., 15.

37. **oblation.** Offering; a spiritual sacrifice.

38. **on the high altar of universal praise.** Joining with all the works of creation in showing forth God's praise.

39. **public solemn acts.** Such as a Coronation, a first meeting of Parliament.

40. **building, music, decoration.** Burke has now returned to a more specific defence of church establishments. He is defending the pomp and splendour thereof. The Church of England has many cathedrals, which are amongst the finest buildings of the world. Worship is accompanied by magnificent music of organ and choir, and by much that is ornamental. The disestablishers usually desire plainer forms of worship.

41. **in speech.** Prayer, praise, exposition, &c.

**in the dignity of persons.** With special ministers of religion maintaining the dignity of the office. Here Burke implies approval of high officers such as bishops, deans, &c.

Page 122. 2. **taught by their nature.** Forms of worship, and questions of government, and suitable dignity, are referred by Burke to human nature which he regards as divinely endowed.

7. **in fomenting the luxury.** A contrast. The references to luxury and pride show how national resources may be used to degrade.

8. **It is the public.** . . . A eulogy of the Church in Burke's climactic style.

16. **a state in which.** . . . The future life.

Para. 160. *These are long prevalent opinions which I have learned as well as meditated.*

Para. 161. *We consider an establishment almost necessary and are zealous in its behalf.*

Page 123. Para. 162. *It is not a thing superadded but the foundation, and the soul of all.*

Para. 163. *We are educated by clergymen; and the associations of our gentry with the church are beneficial to both.*

18. **Ecclesiastic.** Is from Gr. *ecclesia*, church.

Para. 164. *We still maintain medieval modes of instruction and discipline; amended, and enlarged by new ideas; and on this basis we have been able to accomplish in science and arts as much as any other nation.*

38. **institution.** Instruction, and upbuilding in character.

Page 124. 3. **institutions.** Methods of instruction established or recognised.

6. **without altering the ground.** Preserving the same basis while improving. This is the principle often expressed by Bacon.

7. **meliorating.** Improving, enlarging; governs accessions.

8. **accessions of science and literature.** Fresh discoveries of knowledge and learning. Or, literature may have its modern meaning. In the eighteenth century the term is mostly used of such learning as is obtained from literature and ancient records.

9. **as the order.** . . . The gradual progress of discovery is part of the providential order.

11. **Gothic and monkish.** The term Gothic was formerly used of the form of civilisation that prevailed in the two or three centuries preceding the Renaissance or classical revival of the sixteenth century. Thus the architecture of these centuries is known as Gothic; and in literature the characteristics of earlier romances used to be styled Gothic. The Goths were a

section of the Germanic or Teutonic races, the first of them to impress the world. The term was often used of the whole, and sometimes still more widely. In the eighteenth century it was opposed to classical; and thus the terms 'Gothic and monkish' suggest nearly the same thing as unenlightened. Burke holds that the groundwork has been proved sufficient.

Monkish is used instead of clerical because before the Reformation the teachers were usually from the monasteries.

19. **patrimony.** Inheritance; here referring to the system as well as to the teaching.

Para. 165. *The clergy are financially independent.*

26. **precarious contribution of . . .** Uncertainty of private voluntary contributions.

30. **into a pension. . . .** As has just been done in France. The system of payment in England makes the clergymen independent of the government. It is a system of tithes raised from the land.

30. **by the extravagance . . .** This was formerly a frequent thing; and it was so in France.

37. **constitutional motives.** Indicated in the next two sentences. The importance of the point is best seen in the case of judges. Non-political officers should have security of tenure and of income; otherwise they might be tempted to aid factions or individuals, (in former times, the Crown).

Page 125. 5. **king and their nobility independent.** All in former times had landed estates.

Para. 166. *Church property was made private property so as to be guarded by the ordinary law.*

14. **for use or for dominion.** The state cannot make use of, or assert authority over, these funds.

19. **Euripus.** This was a strait where the tides (not understood in the old world) seemed constantly changing; seven times a day it was said; dividing Eubœa from Boeotia. The water still moves with great rapidity. Eubœa is the largest island in the Ægean sea. Here the word denotes ebb and flow, or flux and reflux. The figure is antonomasia.

**funds and actions.** The money market. Actions is here used, in an unusual sense, for shares in stock, or for stocks. A French usage.

Para. 167. *Our chief men believe that religion is needed not only for the poor but still more for the rich and favoured.*

21. **light and leading.** A famous phrase. Light stands for exceptional intelligence.

27. **the great ruling principle . . .** The Divine power and government.

29. **mere invention.** Some of the crude philosophers argued that religion was an invention of priests in the interests of order.

31. **the politic purpose.** Obedience to authority.

36. **the multitude.** The greatest number.

41. **preached to the poor.** Matthew XI., 5, Luke IV., 18. This is referred to as a **test**, because it fulfilled a prophecy, Isa LXI., I, and because the fact was reported to John the Baptist in prison as an evidence.

Page 126. 8. **the miserable great.** Unhappy aristocrats. The term 'great' was used of the nobility and of the chief officers of state.

II. **medicinal attention.** Religious teachers are compared to physicians.

24. **at the loom and in the field.** Amongst weavers and agricultural labourers.

Para. 168. *Both classes also need the consolations of religion.*

32. **contingent.** Share, or proportion : a military usage.

33. **sovereign balm.** Supreme soothing remedy. Balm is a contraction of balsam.

34. **cares and anxieties which . . .** Not having ordinary anxieties they allow their minds to wander at large, and conjure up endless sources of care and trouble.

40. **gloomy void.** Here and in the following clauses he asserts that the minds of the idle are never satisfied.

Page 127. Para. 169. *Defence of a well-paid establishment.*

16. **no way assorted.** Not equal socially.

22. **If the poverty . . .** If all clergymen were poor they would not as a body be respected by the rich. Our constitution has provided that the spiritual teachers of the proud shall be men of recognised position able to reprove with authority.

30. **lay poverty.** Burke means ordinary poverty. A layman is a Christian who is not a clergyman. Gr. *laos* people.

34. **censors.** Correctors. In Rome there were official censors, or examiners, of conduct and morals.

Page 128. 2. **her mitred front.** Front is forehead; mitred refers to the head-dress of bishops. Gr. *mitra* a turban. The Church is personified. Burke refers to the fact that bishops (in his time all of them) are members of the house of lords, and have a high place in the social order. The Archbishop of Canterbury precedes every peer (not royal), and every secular officer of state.

4. **blended with . . .** Amongst clergymen there are degrees of rank corresponding to social gradations.

13. **acquired personal nobility.** Nobility not inherited and not transmitted.

15. **fruit not reward.** It is a natural recognition of their fitness to advise in the most important matters.

19. **Bishop of Durham, or.** These two and London rank the highest of the bishoprics. Above them are the archbishoprics (Canterbury and York).

30. **It is better to cherish . . .** The large salaries allow provision for a staff of assistants and for charity. Some are more liberal than others. Burke is answering those who say that the stipends should be reduced and the money otherwise allocated. Burke says that, though some may be less generous, the discipline of liberty in distribution is beneficial. Men who distribute by command are machines, without freedom or virtue.

Burke, having now fully asserted the right of the Church in regard to property, turns to consider the confiscation or spoliation in France.

Para. 170. *No property can be alienated though it may be re-directed.*

41. **the more or the less.** The question is not of degree but of principle. Compare a different use of the words in Wordsworth's Sonnet on King's College:

High Heaven rejects the lore  
Of nicely calculated less or more.

Page 129. 1. **Too much . . .** To say that some have too much and others too little, and to propose a redistribution, is to set aside a fundamental law of justice.

2. **What evil . . . ?** Here Burke seems to qualify the preceding statement by admitting the right of the Legislature to modify the method of expenditure.

Para. 171. *The critics of the church are impostors.*

12. **mortification.** Asceticism, or self-humiliation.

16. **for virtue.** For men distinguished by virtue.

19. **patois.** Dialect; used of rustic speech.

**cant and gibberish.** Whine and chatter.

22. **primitive evangelic poverty.** The poverty of the first preachers of the gospel.

30. **honest enthusiasts.** Sincere fanatics.

32. **their own goods into common.** A reference to the community of goods in the early Church. "And all that believed were together and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all according as any man had need." Acts II., 44, 45; IV., 32.

33. **their own persons.** Burke has said above that such rules are as binding on the laity as on the clergy.

Para. 172. *Our commons will not confiscate, and no respectable man here approves your conduct.*

41. **ways and means.** *I.e.*, of raising money. The phrase is a technical expression of the House of Commons, which goes into a Committee of Ways and Means to determine the mode of taxation for the raising of the year's revenue.

Page 130. I. **committee of supply.** A similar expression. Supply being the money voted for the annual expenditure.

2. **change Alley.** A street in the money or banking quarters of London. The Jews, who are chief dealers in stocks, are mentioned because of the part they have played in Paris. Burke says they do not expect the same opportunity in England. Alley is a lane.

3. **mortgage.** A conveyance of property as security for the payment of a loan. Fr. *mort* dead and *gage* pledge.

4. **see.** Diocese, the district or province of a bishop (or archbishop). Lat. *sedes* seat.

Para. 173. *Burke rejoices that the English are awake.*

15. **pledge . . . in the cup of.** To drink the health of, and thus wish success to, the French spoliators.

16. **cup of their abominations.** Such drinking would be a participation in the abominable crime.

18. **proved a security.** The conservative and watchful instincts of the country have been roused.

22. **selfish enlargement, narrow liberality.** These phrases are oxymorons. The French pretend to liberality and enlargement of mind, but the reverse is the fact, and their professed regard

for the people is a cloak for their narrowness and envy. Cf. above, "their liberty is not liberal, their humanity is savage"

Para. 174. *In no case should goods be confiscated, but in the case of France, it is enormous tyranny.*

40. **men of exalted rank.** Bishops, abbots, &c. The paragraph is intended as a climax. The interrogation is a mode of emphasis.

Para. 175. *Gradations of cruelty; the alms of the insolent.*

Page 131. 8. **of their own tables.** The clergy are to receive some small allowances taken from their own property.

10. **so bountifully . . .** Stated for contrast.

II. **harpies of usury.** Plundering or rapacious money-lenders. Harpies are mythological creatures, the upper half like women; the lower half like vultures. In the Third Book of the *Aeneid*, which describes the journey of Aeneas towards Italy, they suddenly swoop down and contaminate and devour the food of Aeneas and his party. The term is often applied to extortioners. Akin to Gr. *harfazo* I plunder.

**To drive men from independence.** This is the first stage in a climax of wrongs. Others are, living on alms, provided by the impious, to make the representatives of religion of no esteem. The last two points are the **aggravation** of the degradation.

18. **any guilt except.** The mere degradation of eminent men is such as no virtuous person would inflict on any except those guilty of capital crime. Other elements of **infamy** make it worse than death.

32. **insolent tenderness.** The allowance is given as alms, that is from a professed and insulting tenderness or kindness. Oxymoron.

Para. 176. *The confiscation is pronounced legal because the clergy are 'creatures of the state' and so may be ruined by the state.*

39. **Judgment in law.** Ironical.

41. **Palais Royal.** This was a palace belonging to the Duke of Orleans. In the gardens attached men assembled to hear political harangues. This despicable prince took the side of the Revolution.

**The Jacobins.** This was for a time the chief club, and many of the most violent revolutionaries belonged to it. The name was derived from the place of meeting. This had belonged to some Dominican friars who were called Jacobins because, when they

first settled in Paris in the 13th century, they received the church (or lived in the street) of St. Jacques (*i.e.*, St. James). The name thus passed from friars to the extreme republicans.

Page 132. 2. **under law, usage.** . . . . Here Burke states four grounds of right, any one of which is sufficient.

**decisions.** These are precedents and established law.

3. **accumulated prescription.** . . . . The epithet is used because a much shorter period is sufficient. Prescription is title based on long possession.

4. **ecclesiastics.** The term includes the various kinds of clergymen.

5. **fictitious persons, creatures of the state.** The phrases are synonymous, and mean that as the offices are created so they may be abolished by the State. The holders of the offices have no personal rights apart from the will of the State. Fictitious means, not real; here used in respect of rights.

10. **the fiction.** Viz., that the goods are theirs, while in reality they belong to the State.

**their constructive character.** Their imagined or assigned or fictitious character. Constructive, in this sense, corresponds to the verb construe. It describes what is not actual, but what is construed or imagined as such.

**Of what import.** . . . . Burke brushes aside the argument as sophistry. By ordinary laws of honour the French, if they resolved to abolish church lands, should have allowed those in possession to retain their income for life.

Para. 177. *Such sophistry merits punishment. We can at least denounce it.*

24. **distinction of persons.** *I.e.*, of real and fictitious.

28. **a power which secures indemnity.** The reference may be either to the fact that there is no estate or court to challenge and judge them, or to the fact they have the army on their side.

31. **not the syllogism.** . . . . Not argument but chastisement.

34. **accomplice.** Abetter. Theft refers to the confiscation; murder, to the crimes mentioned above. Those who instigate or defend such things are accomplices.

39. **dungeons and iron cages.** Old and barbarous methods of punishment. There is a direct reference to the reign of Louis XI.

**41. worse tragedies.** Because those now ruined are venerable men.

Page 133. 3. **when to speak honest . . .** We do not need any special means of self-protection. Our censure is *honest* truth if we really feel contempt and abhorrence.

**Para. 178** *Obligation to national creditors is pretended, but the rights of private property are prior and paramount.*

**9. national faith.** The duty of fulfilling obligations, here engagements with creditors. Cf. below, "first and original faith of civil society" where faith is obligation of honour.

**20. prior in time.** The citizen's claim must precede that of the creditor.

**21. paramount in title.** Of higher (and highest) validity. Old Fr. *par, amont* = above. Lat. *mons.*

**superior in equity.** Equity means reasonable justice or fairness. The term is used of cases where there is no exact written law applicable.

**The fortunes of . . .** This and the following sentences assert that no national creditor ever expects to be paid except with public money ; that is, money derived from just taxation.

**35. mortgage his injustice as . . .** Pledge to keep an engagement by means of money unjustly obtained. To pledge injustice would be illegal, and therefore invalid.

**Para. 179. Gross inconsistency, and injustice.**

**39. new public faith.** New code of honour.

Page 134. 1. **the description of . . .** The order of the clergy was considered less worthy of favour than the race of stock-jobbers.

**2. the old government.** *I. e., up to 1789.*

**12. better; for money is paid.** Referring to the old practice of purchasing appointments by paying large sums of money beforehand. Public appointments were obtained by payments to the State, or to the predecessor. Burke considers this an additional reason for not withholding the pension earned.

**22. that now exists.** The new France which repudiates the obligations of the old France.

**Para. 180. Proposal to repudiate treaties.**

**27. with perfect consistency.** *I. e., in breaking faith.* The whole sentence is scornful.

32. **external . . .** Towards other countries.

**virgin.** New and innocent. Irony.

Para. 181. *This paragraph is transitional to an attempted explanation of this perversion of faith. Of three powers specified the greatest alone is held valid, and it involves a preference for the class which has the most questionable rights. Why?*

40. **The treasure of . . .** It is in finance that kings have been most checked.

Page 135. 3. **sovereign dominion . . . purse.** Absolute power including full rights of taxation.

5. **far beyond the trust.** Special powers of taxation may be entrusted on special occasions (as during war); but this is much more than that.

7. **dangerous power.** Viz., of controlling the revenues. Such power is dangerous because with ample money the king can be independent of his people's wishes, or may make war upon them. It makes despotism possible.

10. **body of property deriving . . .** The rights or claims of the monied class; which first became important when kings had to depend on them for the means of carrying out their policy.

14. **partial favour.** Partiality.

Para. 182-184. *The rise of a powerful class whose property was in money and who began to rival the landed nobility.*

20. **vast debt.** What is called the National Debt. Money advanced to government on occasions of increased or new expenditure; now hundreds of millions sterling.

21. **monied interest . . . great power.** The persons providing such sums are rich and numerous, and groups of money-lenders or stock-holders naturally unite to watch the condition of affairs and secure the best terms for themselves. A "monied interest" means a mass of important interests to be looked after, though the phrase may also be used of the persons. Power necessarily belongs to those on whom Government is dependent.

24. **circulation . . .** Exchange of hands.

25. **mutual convertibility.** The buying or selling of land. This was prevented by laws which kept estates hereditary in families.

27. **Family settlements . . .** This is the first of four reasons which prevented sales. Apart from entail a man could settle his property so that for a long time it could not go out of

he family. Neither son nor grandson could sell it. More general means, more frequent or more widely spread.

29. **jus retractus.** Right of taking back. A special law allowing feudal families to recover what an ancestor had sold.

30. **held by the crown.** For royal revenues. These could not be sold or alienated from the king.

31. **Maxim.** Acknowledged principle.

32. **ecclesiastical corporations.** Religious houses such as nonasteries.

Para. I83. *This class was disliked; and it envied the nobility.*

41. **aggravating them.** On account of the heavy taxation required for paying interest on the debt.

Page I36. 5. **naked titles.** Mere titles and rank without land or money.

I4. **by the usual means.** Intermarriage.

25. **struck at the nobility.** By abolishing high appointments and landed estates in the church they cut off one great outlet and source of wealth for men of noble families.

31. **commendatory abbeys.** Abbeys which could be held in commendam, i. e., in trust until a substantive appointment should be made. In particular such were often held by bishops. An abbey is a monastery ruled by an abbot. It is the highest kind thereof.

Para I84. *This monied class is more active and adventurous than the landed proprietors, therefore more effective, and more ready to welcome change, and it is recruited from the lovers of change.*

Page I37. Para. I85-I88. *Another new class: the men of letters.*

Lewis the XIV., the great monarch, born 1638, reigned from 1643 to 1715. His reign is famous in literature as well as in war. The great dramatists Corneille, Racine, Molière, and a host of writers in poetry and prose then flourished. The decline of his greatness may be dated from the victories of Marlborough. This monarch expressed his political creed in the words "I am the State."

I2. **the regent.** Philip of Orleans became regent, as Louis XV. was a child of five years when his grandfather died.

I3. **successors.** Louis XV., born 1710, died 1774.

14. **favours and emoluments.** Both in France and in England the period of personal or official patronage came to an end in the first half of the 18th century.

19. **a sort of incorporation.** The entire body of literary and philosophic writers were drawn together and were filled with a common spirit. Thus they could co-operate. Lat. *corpus* body.

20. **two academies.** One of these, styled the Academy of Sciences but usually known as The Academy, consists of forty of the leading men of France, a new member being elected as each dies. The Academy began as a literary club in 1629. Six years later it was constituted by the King, and thereafter its constitution was legally determined. A main object of its existence was to fix the French language according to correct rules of formation and composition. It is still an important institution, and membership is a high honour.

The other academy, called the Academy of Inscriptions, was appointed to devise inscriptions in honour of Louis XIV. and to celebrate his triumphs.

20. **the encyclopaedia.** This huge work marks an epoch in the history of thought. The first volume appeared in 1751, and the final volumes in 1765. The contributors were numerous and distinguished. The chief editor was Diderot, and, next to him, D'Alembert a mathematician; and they were supported by the ablest men in France. The work was inspired by antagonism to the Jesuits; and it naturally encountered their opposition and persecution. "The glory of the Encyclopædists lies not in their contempt for things holy, but in their hatred of things unjust, in their denunciation of the trade in slaves, of the inequalities of taxation, of the corruption of justice, of the wastefulness of wars, in their dreams of social progress, in their sympathy with the rising empire of industry which was beginning to transform the world."

An Encyclopædia is a dictionary not of words but of ideas, discoveries, and knowledge generally. Gr. *en*, *kuklos* a cycle, *paideia*, instruction.

Para. 186. 24. *Their active hatred of Christianity.*

**literary cabal.** The men of letters acting in co-operation.

30. **spirit of proselytism.** . . . They were actively aggressive in the endeavour to spread unbelief.

36. **the medium of opinion.** By bringing the general thought of the country over to their side.

38. **to establish a dominion.** This method of propagating ideas and aims by getting a command of the press and other

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agencies of publication and puffery is, in some degree, always pursued.

Page 138. 15. **atheistical fathers.** Used in antithesis to the Jesuit 'fathers.' So also they "talk against monks with the spirit of a monk." They have the zeal and the narrowness of those they denounce.

18. **men of the world.** *I. e.,* as caballers.

21. **literary monopoly.** The same as "possessing the avenues" above. They secure that their writings are praised, and other writings ignored or condemned.

28. **persecution which would . . .** Such as we now see in the French Revolution.

Para. 187. *Developments in the plan of attack.*

41. **a spirit of cabal . . .** Men that otherwise would have been genial and admirable became offensive through a depraved zeal. Burke is here recalling his own experiences in Paris when he was greatly shocked by the tone of educated and literary society.

Page 139 5. **foreign princes.** Frederick the Great of Prussia is chiefly intended. He had formerly been intimate with Voltaire and other literary men.

9. **thunderbolt of despotism.** Interposition of an outside despot. A thunderbolt descends from above; on the other hand an earthquake is from beneath and is thus an appropriate image of disturbance amongst the populace.

12. **late king.** Frederick died 1788 (born 1712).

15. **cultivated.** Sought favour with. The monied classes helped them to control of the Press.

Para. 188-189. *In the union of these two classes, and the effect of literature on the people, is to be found the explanation of all that has happened.*

24. **the alliance therefore.** They were able (by journals, magazines and books) to create a favourable attitude towards the formerly unpopular stock-holders. The Economists were allied to both classes.

33. **demagogues.** Leaders of the people; used of selfish men who for ambition or private ends court favour with the people, flattering them and pandering to their tastes. The reference here is explained by the preceding sentence. Voltaire is one of the most famous of satirists.

34. as a link to unite. . . . They were able to make two opposite classes, the rich dealers in stocks and the famished poor, to unite against the established order.

Page 140. 3. their junction and politics. Their co-operation and their common political aim.

5. as a cause. As what produced the effect. The analogy is with physical causes. The effect is a resultant of forces whose simultaneous action constitutes the cause.

7. and the great care. . . . This is the suspicious thing which lends some plausibility to Burke's explanation. Burke implies that a monied interest called into existence by the Crown, and drawing so largely from the revenues, would have been an object of literary attack had there not been special reasons for the opposite.

II. artificially. By skilful artifices.

13. on what other. . . . A skilfully constructed sentence, well-rounded and arranged to produce and deepen surprise.

Para. 190. *The parties that should bear the risks.*

23. stake. What is pledged or hazarded. Here both ideas are combined. The nation pledges the public estate, its full revenue available; this left an element of hazard in the advances of the money speculators.

35. insolvency. Case of bankruptcy.

40. new institute. New system of doctrine.

41. who in equity ought. That is, either the speculators, or the members of government who encouraged the speculation. Equity = fairness.

42. those are to answer. . . . The Church.

Page 141. Para. 191. *The public debt of the clergy.*

II. this debt of the clergy. Burke here notes another inconsistency. If the estates did not truly belong to the clergy then debts contracted on them were invalid. But the debts are pronounced legal and valid. Thereby the property is acknowledged as legally theirs; while simultaneously it is taken from them. For the debt cf. Para. 200, where it is said "they contracted debts for the state."

Para. 192. *The responsibility of the ministers of state.*

25. comptrollers general. Finance ministers; the French designation.

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27. **and bankers.** Burke is referring to such as were advisers of government and shared responsibility.

30. **M. Laborde.** A financial agent under Louis XV.

36. **one description.** The ecclesiastical ; but estates of the nobility followed.

37. **Duke de Choiseul.** 1719-1785. Chief minister 1758-1770.

Page 142. 7. **Duke d'Aiguillon.** Born 1720. He succeeded Choiseul as foreign and prime minister and was responsible for mismanagement of affairs.

9. **a protecting despotism.** The crown.

13. **family of Noailles.** The most distinguished of the family was Adrian Maurice, Duke of Noailles, a Marshal of France and also a statesman; 1678-1766. A grandson born 1756 is also eminent.

18. **Duke de Rochefoucault.** Noted as a philanthropist, 1747-1827.

19. **cardinal.** This is the highest rank or title (except Pope) in the Catholic church. The honour is conferred on distinguished bishops, and also on priests. Popes are elected by the conclave of cardinals.

27. **Rouen.** A town in the north of France, on the Seine, noted for its cathedral.

29. **proscription.** The term is derived from the civil wars of Rome. It meant death and confiscation. Those doomed were proscribed; *i. e.*, their names were published. Here the reference is to exclusion and confiscation.

Para. 193. *This confiscation is as extensive as any in the cruel civil wars of Rome.*

38. **crudelē illam hastam.** That cruel spear (or auction). The phrase refers to the use of a spear in auctions or public sales ; the manner having arisen in the earlier sales of war booty.

Page 143. 3. **Their passions.** They were full of revenge and also afraid lest their rivals might at any time re-establish their power.

7. **reciprocated.** This term along with **retaliations** seems tautological, but the meaning is that both sides were guilty both of infliction and of retaliation. **Recent** means still fresh, the wounds being not healed.

Para. 194. *Former tyrants put forth plausible justifications.*

29. **such was your pleasure.** A reference to the use of 'please' or 'pleasure' in official documents. The words illustrate arbitrariness.

30. **Harry the Eighth.** Henry VIII (1509-1547). The familiar form Harry was a mispronunciation.

39. **a commission.** At the time of the Reformation kings and nobles were too willing to enrich themselves from the spoil of the Church. Popular opinion, however, required either the abolition, or the radical reform of the monasteries. The appointment of a Commission to examine and report is a usual preliminary.

Page 144. 6. **dark age.** Ironical; so "improved state of the human mind" above.

7. **creature of Creation of.** *I.e.*, unreal.

12. **Formal surrender.** Formal is opposed to voluntary. The government were able to compel the surrender.

**operose.** Laborious; roundabout.

14. **most decided tyrants.** Exaggeration. The Tudors were despotic, but they consulted national feeling. There were special instances of cruelty.

17. **servile houses.** The Parliament of that day.

**a share of the spoil.** *I.e.*, of lands.

18. **eternal immunity.** Permanent freedom. Of course the immunity was not lasting.

24. **incantation.** Words with magical effect.

25. **Philosophy Light.** . . . These are the watch-words in Paris. *Liberality* means liberalism, or assumed mental enlightenment.

Para. 195. *On regard for public esteem; the sense of shame.*

29. **homage.** . . . to justice. In concealing the arbitrary character of their conduct they acknowledged a principle of justice.

31. **remorse, shame.** Shame has reference to the judgment of the world; remorse to self-judgment (unless it is used in the sense of pity). It is implied that 'shame', or a sense of regard for the opinion of others, is a moral principle.

32. **Whilst shame.** . . . The idea expressed allegorically. Cf. the allegory in the *Vicar of Wakefield* XV: "Shame being naturally timorous returned back to keep company with Virtue."

Para. 196. *A poet's condemnation.*

37. **political poet.** Sir John Denham (1615-1669) author of a poem, *Cooper's Hill*, written in vigorous heroic couplets and describing the beauty of the region. His lines on the Thames are the best known.

Page 145. 10. **Wealth is crime enough.** . . . The possession of wealth is sufficient reason for confiscation, to the party in need of money. So next sentence.

Para. 197. *Was a policy of plunder financially necessary?*

Page 146. 11. **repartition of burdens.** Redistribution of taxation. The suggestion is that the difficulties could have been solved by reasonable impositions on the two orders hitherto unduly privileged.

**before the Orders.** Before the three estates ; this was prior to the formation of the National Assembly. Necker was finance minister. The orders, and the Assembly, remained at Versailles until December.

Para. 198. *The financial condition, May 1789 ; i. e., at the first meeting of the states.*

22. **permanent charges.** Annual necessary expenditure.

24. **fixed revenue.** Estimated income.

**livres.** The old standard coin, now replaced by the franc; from Lat. *libra* a pound. Twenty-five francs are equivalent to one pound sterling.

31. **Quel pays.** . . . What country is there other than this, gentlemen, where, without imposts and by simple means that are unperceived, one can make a deficit disappear which has made such noise in Europe.

35. **reimbursement.** Refunding ; paying back. Some special arrangements are referred to.

**sinking.** Lowering or lessening. A technical term. In England there are always sinking funds, that is money employed for the reduction of the National Debt.

36. **Public credit.** Which have for their object the strengthening of the public credit (or national reputation), and thus creating confidence.

Page 147. I. **assessment on . . . General tax.**

Para. 199. *Alternatives.*

**19. contribution.** The assessment above. Necker's statement was not complete, some reimbursements and extraordinary expenditure being omitted; nor were his proposals sufficient.

Para. 200. *The nobility and still more the clergy were eager to bear their share.*

**31. renunciation.** This term is used because hitherto they had enjoyed privileges of immunity.

Para. 201. *An extreme supposition; the real design.*

**38. fictions.** Ineffective and unreal proposals.

**39. lords of articles at . . .** An insinuation that the Assembly are compelled to carry out the will of the Jacobin club. The term articles was variously used to denote heads, clauses, points. Thus the English Church Confession is known as the Thirty-nine Articles; military regulations are called articles of war, &c.

Page 148. **10. the real purpose of the managers.** The Jacobin desired the destruction of the Church.

Para. 202. *Actual contributions of the nobility and clergy.*

**21. excise, custom.** The former are duties on articles made and consumed at home; the latter are duties on exports and imports.

**23. indirect impositions.** Direct taxes are those raised directly on income or property or by capitation. Indirect taxes are duties levied on articles of commodity, or in connection with business transactions.

**26. capitation.** A tax on the individual, so much per head of each household; the same as poll-tax; originally a war tax.

**27. twentieth penny.** What was called the *vingtième*. This also was an eighteenth century tax, chiefly on real property. In 1760 it was raised to about one-sixth of the income.

**31. provinces annexed.** France had never been homogeneous. Some provinces, such as Alsace, Lorraine and minor parts, had been annexed in the wars. Other parts, such as Brittany, were scarcely incorporated.

**37. old provinces.** Which have belonged to France for many centuries. Specially the region of which Paris was the centre.

**38. redeemed themselves.** They had purchased permanent freedom from the tax by granting a capital sum agreed upon.

Page 149. I. contracted debts.—The clergy granted to the Crown a subsidy every five years, and also special sums during war. These they often raised by loans repaid from their incomes.

Para 203. *A very liberal offer, and the reasons for its refusal. A new landed interests desired.*

II. Aix. In the south of France. This archbishop took a prominent part, and was for some time President of the National Assembly.

24. **plan of extortion.** That proposed by the archbishop.

26. **new landed interest.** The monied men who have obtained church lands. This new class was desired because it would be attached to the new constitution.

28. **for its very being.** This interest would not have been created, and could not continue, apart from the revolution. The full restoration of the monarchy would be followed by the restoration of church lands. Thus for very existence it must be on the side of the revolution.

Para. 204. *Impracticable schemes.*

38. **by depreciating . . .** Value depends on the relations of supply and demand, the greatly undue supply naturally cheapened land.

40. **sudden diversion . . .** Fewer men were now occupied with the money market, having put their money into land. Consequently there was less money in circulation.

Page 150. 9. **take stock in exchange for.** Not a project of sale but of making the church lands a security for their borrowings.

II. **in equalising the objects.** It would be difficult to fix what portion of the lands was equivalent to the money advanced.

14. **The municipalities. . . .** Other cities or districts in France desired a share of the spoil. They wished something which would aid in reviving industry and promoting business.

27. **Public exigencies.** Various requirements of public life as circumstances develop.

29. **call for supply.** Money required for the public services, which the Assembly must grant.

32. **Into bishops and abbots.** Into the possessors of the estates of bishops and abbots.

33. **the old debt.** The interest on the National Debt, and payments with a view to the lessening of the Debt.

33. contracted a new debt. *I. e.*, they borrowed more money from the financiers, thus making matters worse.

34. new paper currency. The *assignats* formerly referred to.

38. Bank of discount. This Bank was founded by Turgot in 1776 and served as a sort of national Bank. It was for a time prosperous but in the troubles of the Revolution it suffered, and in 1793 it was closed. In 1786 it lent 70 millions to Government and received a monopoly of issuing notes for thirty years. In August 1789 a Decree had to be made giving its notes forced circulation.

Para. 205. *Why the acceptance of assignats was made compulsory.*

Page 151. 2. the only resource. The only way out of the confusion and the only way of maintaining power.

7. to bind the nation. . . . If once the *assignats* were received in circulation it became the interest of every one to uphold the system which gave them value. The first thing therefore was to secure circulation by making acceptance compulsory.

14. centre from which. . . . See next paragraph.

Para. 206. *Various uses of the Church money.*

19. To cut off. In these two sentences Burke imputes motives for the abolition of the Paris parliament.

27. their compensation. These dismissed lawyers (or magistrates) are to be compensated by payments which come ultimately from the church lands.

38. liquidation. Clearing off.

41. new church paper. The *assignats*. The sentence is satirical.

Page 152. 3. to take their share of martyrdom or. The alternatives for these legal authorities are, either to accept nothing or to take what is their due in a form that is symbolic of crime and therefore to them specially offensive.

9. Even the clergy. . . . They also must accept what is symbolic of sacrilege and overthrow, or have nothing. The phrase depreciated paper suggests the smallness of their allowance. The phrase indelible character is used technically of the distinction conferred on a priest.

14. upon credit. Upon the confidence naturally placed in a state. Liberty is here chiefly the right to have one's own; the action of the authorities being tyrannical.

Para. 207. *Another discovery, and more evil effects.*

20. **arcaneum.** Secret.

30. **philosophic purchasers.** Burke suggests that men without money are to receive lands. Such may be of the literary class; or they may be reckoned philosophic on account of the nature of their bargain.

31. **sort of fine.** The point<sup>2</sup> in this and the next sentence is that the land is not to be bought but rather received as a conditioned gift, this generosity being qualified by a preliminary payment which may be regarded as a fine.

34. **on the feudal tenure.** As lands were gifted by the Crown on condition of service when required, so these lands are given at a nominal price on condition of zealous attachment.

37. **The consequence . . .** The result will be that money for subsequent payments will be wrung from the land by high rents, and by sale of woods and other materials. The peasantry will suffer.

38. **grantees.** Those who receive what may be considered a grant or gift.

Burke now turns to the Monarchical system. He argues that what France needed was reform on the basis of the three estates, not revolution on the basis of the one Assembly. By an examination of the population, wealth and various achievements of France before the revolution, he argues that its government was not bad, and was far better than the present.

Para. 208. *The attack on the old government is made as if there was no choice except of either extreme.*

Page 153. 19. **old monarchical government.** *I. e.,* the government as it existed through the 17th and 18th centuries up to the meeting of the Sates-general. It was monarchical, and not mixed or constitutional. That is to say, all authority was vested in the king.. Gr. *monos* alone and *arche* rule. Note in this sentence the periodic structure which puts all the subordinate clauses and material before the principal clause, and the emphasis secured by reserving to the very end the new subject introduced.

31. **third option.** Something intermediate between the two extremes. There are proverbially three courses. Englishmen generally favour a *via media* or policy of compromise.

Page 154. 2. **a monarchy directed by . . .** This sentence more than any other in the book is descriptive of a constitutional monarchy. The first phrase, directed by laws, means that the monarch does not act according to the judgment or impulse of the moment but by fixed methods recognised as constitutional. His ministers are required to put before him the constitutional and other bearings of whatever difficulty may arise. All are subject to the laws.

3. **controlled and balanced . . .** Burke is describing a system under which the sovereign had more, and the commons less, power than are now exercised by them in Britain. In former times the nobility were useful as a check on the crown ; now their desire is to be a check only on the commons.

4. **hereditary wealth.** Represented in Burke's day by the peerage. At that time men had not begun to contemplate vast hereditary wealth apart from land. Now, enormous hereditary wealth is in the hands of bankers.

6. **by a judicious check. . . .** The check exercised by the country at large through the House of Commons. Burke's language is carefully chosen so as not to countenance theories of universal suffrage or equal electoral districts. The House of Commons must be the organ of the "reason and feeling" of the people at large and must be elected by people of superior minds. It must be a judicious assembly acting with knowledge and prudence.

11. **mixed and tempered.** Another description of constitutional Government. 'Tempered' implies that the mixing is in due proportion and adaptation, so as to make an effective whole.

12. **may repute that nation. . . .** The clause describes what has happened in France; so that here Burke seems to condemn a whole nation—a thing which in a famous former saying he pronounced himself unable to do.

15. **with ease.** By the simple calling of the States-general. *Confirm* refers to the continuance of Government by the King and estates, with the mutual checks thus secured.

20. **a pure democracy.** Where there are no higher orders with separate powers.

Para. 209. *Democracy; and the evils thereof. Another form of tyranny.*

28. **in a direct train of.** On the way to. A train is a linked succession.

29. **oligarchy.** Literally, government by few. Burke prophesies that the government will fall into the hands of a small body who will control the whole country.

39. **Considerable democracies.** Large democracies. Burke suggests (as the Greeks also taught) that the democratic form is suitable only in small states where the population is numbered by thousands rather than millions.

Page 155. 4. **absolute.** The same as pure, above; where there is no senate, or upper House.

9. **a republic.** This term has the same meaning as state (literally, the public thing) and is applicable to limited monarchies, though at the present day it is used only where there is no hereditary monarch.

12. **the majority of.** Burke here indicates one of the great evils of unqualified democracy. What is thought right is carried out in disregard of the feelings and interests of minorities. There are no checks, such as require prolonged deliberation. And the majority is often wrong.

14. **oppression.** The oppression is greater because corporate bodies have less conscience than individuals have. Cf. 'shameless.'

23. **Under a cruel.** In the case of tyranny there are consolations due to sympathy or approval; in the other case, not.

Para. 210. *Even at its best it is less desirable than monarchy, which is more easily modified.*

Page 156. 12. **better ingraft any.** It is more easy to change a personal into a constitutional monarchy than to limit a democracy. The reason is that pure democracies if they are united are able to resist any methods of attempted control. By the term *ingraft* (metaphor from gardening) Burke means the gradual introduction and growth of a new principle. There are cases of the transformation of republics into military empires; as in Rome, and in the coming instance of Napoleon.

Para. 211. *Good men scorn to abuse the fallen.*

20. **fawning sycophant.** Cringing courtier.

26. **satirists.** Persons who hold up to ridicule. The French have a genius for satire.

29. **mortal institutions.** Compared with individuals institutions are often styled immortal: but Burke is assuming that the French monarchy has been killed.

Para. 212. *The existence of abuses and the necessity of reform admitted.*

33. **unqualified.** Pure or absolute.

**ill-qualified.** Insufficiently limited. It was open to discussion which epithet was more applicable to France.

**41. panegyric.** Eulogy of a formal kind : (originally in a public assembly.)

Page 157. 2. of its existence. Reform or destruction?

**6. area cleared.** The figure is from house-building. Was it necessary to remove the old completely and begin anew?

**7. theoretical, experimental.** Both terms are used of what is not based on experience. Experimental here means tentative ; put forth for trial.

**8. All France was of a different . . .** Burke's statement here is sometimes challenged but it is substantially correct. Great reforms were proposed but there was no desire for the overthrow of the monarchy. Nor was there any intention of destroying the three estates, though there was a desire to make the third paramount.

**18. led by degrees, hurried.** This is what actually happened.

**25. between the instructions and the Revolution.** The former refer to the date of the elections, early in 1789. The revolution may-be dated from the formation of the National Assembly, first declared on 17th June, or possibly from the bringing of the King, and thereafter the Assembly, to Paris, 6th October. The States-general met on 5th May. The instructions are the recommendations sent up with the Deputies from the country.

**Para. 213. What are the facts? Examples of real tyranny.**

**34. Tahmas Kouli Khan.** Better known as Nadir Shah, a Persian warrior who usurped the throne and ruled tyrannically. He invaded India and captured Delhi. Born 1688, died 1747.

**35. anarchic despotism.** Combination of arbitrary personal rule with frequent outbursts of riot and murder. Note the skilful climax that follows, describing the desolation wrought in the south-east of Europe. In former times Constantinople was a great centre of civilisation.

Page 158. 8. **opinions.** Established or prevalent ideas. The French monarchy was limited by the civilisation and general enlightenment of France.

**Para. 214. The facts regarding population. This is the first standard or test.**

**21. Intendants of the generalities.** Commissioners of the provinces. There were thirty two generalities or provinces in France. Each was ruled by an Intendant, whose duties were

those of a collector, magistrate and commissioner of police combined. The division was originally made for revenue purposes.

38. **ultimate term.** Maximum. Term = *terminus*. So *acme* the highest point. Gr.

Page 159. II. **Sanguine.** Over-hopeful: *sanguis* blood.

20. **leagues.** A varying measure, usually about three miles.

24. **United Kingdom.** The three Kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland, now united.

Para. 215. *The distribution of the people.*

31. **indulgence of nature.** Fertility of the soil.

38. **middle term.** Average, or mean.

Page 160. Para. 216. *Such multitudes could not exist and increase under a very bad government.*

The increase of population in France and England in the latter half of the 18th century is to be associated with the increase of manufactures and industries.

Para 217. *Wealth; a second standard. Necker's estimates of the amount coined.*

31. **British dominions.** In Europe and America.

39. **public economy.** Financial administration.

Page 161. I. **political arithmetic.** The calculations on which policy is based.

12. **sterling.** English standard money. The term is derived from 'east' and is an abbreviation of esterling, a term applied to traders who came to England from an easterly direction, i.e., from the region of the Baltic or from Germany. Their metal was considered best.

Para. 218. *Estimate of the amount in circulation.*

14. **bullion.** Gold or silver uncoined; i. e., in bars &c.

25. **numeraire.** Cash (i. e., in metal).

Para. 219. *Reflections on the above. A vision of the greatness of France.*

38. **returned into its bosom.** Much of what was coined may have gone abroad for purchasing imported goods; but if so a similar amount must have come in for exports. The calculation was that in sixty years a hundred millions had been coined, of

which eighty eight millions were still in use. Some portion would necessarily go out of circulation from wear, or loss, or hoarding, or other cause.

Page 162. 6. **discouraged industry, insecure property.** These would prevent growth of wealth and abundant circulation.

8. **when I consider.** One of the grand climaxes.

**face.** Appearance, what is visible to an onlooker.

12. **opportunity of.** Opportunities afforded by. Referring both to the nature of the country and the advantages of the canals.

**canals.** The French are skilled in engineering and the level character of most of the country has allowed the construction of canals from rivers. These are useful both for agriculture and for roadways.

26. **culture.** Such as the vine and olive in the south; and general agriculture. France is a fertile country.

30. **fabrics.** Textile; *i. e.*, woven.

32. **foundations of charity.** Educational and charitable institutions.

34. **arts that beautify.** Fine arts and liberal arts (not merely useful arts).

40. **profane.** Secular.

Page 163. 6. **a fabric.** Here in the sense of building. Burke sees in France a great creation of human enterprise.

14. **a British Constitution.** A perfect constitution such as exists in Britain.

Para. 220. *The government of Louis XVI was mild and willing to reform.*

18. **inconstancy and fluctuation.** What is called vacillation. The Government often made concessions which they again tried to withdraw. They had no steadfast policy.

19. **court<sup>s</sup>.** Royal Courts.

31. **facility.** Readiness to listen; pliancy.

33. **spirit of innovation.** Readiness to accept untried schemes and novel suggestions.

38. **levity.** Lit. lightness, want of realisation of the gravity of things.

41. **to compare**. . . . We could not expect in a government accustomed to arbitrary rule the same capacity to deal with new difficulties that we look for in a constitutional government.

Page 164. 5. **rigour**. Severity of discipline.

9. **donations, expenses, horrors**. Three types of abuses. These were less in the reign of Louis XVI., than in former reigns.

Para. 221. *It is very doubtful whether this population and wealth will be maintained under the new constitution.*

13. **system**. The term suggests something more rational than what now exists.

15. **give a better account of**. Show better results.

33. **Circean**. Fascinating and bewitching. Circe was a sorceress who by a magic draught turned the companions of Ulysses into swine. Burke thoroughly means this epithet, just as he does not mean 'British despotism'; but in what shade of sense he uses 'voluptuous' it is difficult to determine. Perhaps simply in the sense of delightful.

34. **frozen regions**. The uncongenial cold of northern Canada. In Canada there is great variety of climate. A considerable proportion of the population, especially in Quebec, is French.

Para. 222. *Misery on the one hand and boastfulness on the other.*

Page 165. 6. **academicians of Laputa** . . . The reference is to the third part of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. Therein Swift attempts to ridicule the science of his day. The creatures of Laputa did everything mathematically, but "imagination, fancy and invention they are wholly strangers to."

13. **out of employment though** . . . The presence of the court and assembly would in ordinary circumstances help business. But want of confidence paralyses industry, and capitalists will not invest freely. The number in Paris without regular means of substance was officially calculated in 1791 at over one hundred and eighteen thousand. Mendicancy had been rife for many years.

21. **standing committee**. Permanent committee. It is thereby admitted that the evil cannot soon cease. Next sentence indicates two modes of dealing with it—coercion and kindness.

22. **police**. Used not of the men but of the policy or actions.

Page 166. 8. *sometimes by . . . Devices for helping to conceal the state of the facts.*

17. *price of comfort . . . France is giving up comfort and opulence for the sake of liberty accompanied by poverty. But the liberty is of a doubtful and suspicious character.*

22. *which has no wisdom . . . Another allegory: as in para. 195.*

Burke now passes to the noblesse. As in the preceding chapter, so here, he makes only slight references to the parallel conditions in England. The nobility of France were not faultless, but they were not oppressive. Such social distinction gives permanence to reputation, and creates a class which is the crown of the social order.

Para. 223. *If the nobles had been guilty as some have been.*

Page 167. 2. *only a libel.* *i.e., if the nobility were to be regarded as private persons, but the question of an estate, or House of nobles, is involved. Lat. *libellus* a lampoon: dimin. of *liber* a book.*

4. *Had your . . . Examples are given of oppressive nobles or upper classes. Gentry are the lower aristocracy.*

8. *Hanse-towns.* Towns in the north of Germany which in the 12th or 13th century combined to defend their wealth against plunder on land or piracy by sea. The term *hanse* means league. According to Hallam, "eighty of the most considerable places constituted the Hanseatic Confederacy, divided into four colleges whereof Lübec, Cologne, Brunswick and Dantzig were the leading towns." At the present day the name Hanse towns is applied to the free cities Lubeck, Hamburg and Bremen.

10. *Orsini, Vitelli.* Examples from the history of Italy. Burke goes back to the later Middle Ages when daring nobles were to be found in every country.

13. *Mamalukes.* A body of mounted soldiery in Egypt, finally annihilated in 1811. They were originally Turkish slaves (Arab. *mamlük* a possession); but for several centuries they were able to control the government of Egypt.

14. *The Nayres, or Nairs, an aboriginal tribe.* The illustrations show the variety of Burke's historical reading.

17. **The statues of Equity.** . . The veiling of the statutes means the suspension of the principles objectified and personified in these forms. Men might cease to be merciful and even equitable until these enemies were extinguished.

22. **in favour of its own principles.** In order that right might be ultimately established it might be necessary to depart from it for a time.

28. **civil war between the vices.** One cruel party contending with another; the wicked commons overthrowing the wicked nobles. It is implied that their respective vices differ.

Para. 224. *But the nobles surrendered privileges and recommended reform.*

32. **or their constituents.** The noblesse who elected them.

41. **order should be abolished.** On 4th August on the report of a committee, all feudal survivals were abolished. In December special electoral conditions were ended. And in June 1790 titles were abolished.

Page 168. 10. **Upon a free.** . . All classes were agreed in favour of constitutional government.

II. **The absolute.** . . The king acquiesced in the new principles.

15. **the preference of a despotic.** . . The phrase **reciprocal control** describes Burke's conception of the right form of a constitution—one part balancing or checking another—while **despotic** implies the concentration of power in a single authority.

16. **democracy** is what has been adopted.

Para. 225. *On Henry IV and the fashion of praising him.*

19. **affectation.** A term suggestive of insincerity.

25. **insidious.** Sinister, with some secret object.

28. **descendant.** Henry IV was the first of the Bourbons.

29. **good-natured.** Well-disposed.

37. **politici.** Guided by expediency in national matters.

Page 169. I. **soft language with.** Cf. "the iron hand in the velvet glove"; or the combination of *fortiter in re*, and *suaviter in modo* (firmly in the thing, sweetly in the manner).

3. **in the gross.** As an unbroken whole. The same meaning is expressed in next sentence by 'prerogative,' 'capital' and 'claims.'

4. **In the detail.** As particular cases arose. The same meaning is expressed by the spending of income,

13. **merited.** Won. The term usually means 'deserved.'

16. **regicides whom.** . . . The men who killed Henry III. (1589). This siege and capture of Paris is again referred to in the last part of the book.

Para. 226. *Henry IV used to speak with pride of the nobility.*

Para. 227. *Burke's eulogy of the French noblesse.*

39. **of an high spirit.** Magnanimous, or with lofty ideas.

**delicate.** Refined, keen, sensitive.

Page 170. 2. **corps.** Body: *i. e.*, order.

3. **censorial.** Watchful.

4. **officious.** Obliging.

6. **military tone.** Sentiments of honour.

7. **tinctured with literature.** Tinged with learning; *i. e.*, sharpened or tempered by literary culture.

Para. 228. *Their attitude towards those beneath them.*

30. **the old tenures.** Burke puts the blame on the system rather than the persons. Feudal laws and customs were in many cases out of date. Here the reference is to serfdom, which lingered in some provinces. There were also many harassing conditions in most places.

31. **by rent.** Therefore by mutual agreement.

34. **in partnership.** According to a system by which the produce was shared.

Page 171. 5. **much of the civil government . . .** The Intendants were not drawn from the nobility. The next sentence refers still more to them.

II. **the men of the sword.** *I. e.*, the nobles, from whom most officers of the army were drawn.

12. **vices of its principle.** Where taxes interfered with the natural liberty of the individual or of trade.

13. **vexations . . . in its management.** Annoyances in the method of collection on the part of over-bearing officials.

Para. 229. *Four faults acknowledged*

20. **foolish imitation.** The innovating spirit introduced many English fashions. Carlyle puts emphasis on things connected with racing and modes of riding.

23. **what perhaps they meant.** *I. e.,* the higher qualities of manliness.

31. **more exterior decorum.** External propriety tends to prevent the knowledge and exposure and correction of internal evil.

32. **licentious philosophy.** Free-thinking, which tends to licentiousness.

34. **another error.** . . . Too much aristocratic aloofness. There should have been more inter-communication with the wealthy upper middle classes.

40. **not equally with that.** . . . Burke however does not allow that one raised by wealth is the equal of one ennobled for public services or learned distinction, or who is the inheritor of extensive lands.

Page 172. I. **punctiliously.** Ceremoniously.

Para. 230. *But this evil of caste feeling could have been gradually remedied; and so other faults.*

6. **The military.** Commissions in the army.

8. **error of opinion.** Error due to prevailing sentiments and ideas. It could have been corrected by the growth of new ideas.

12. **invidious.** Causing ill-will.

Para. 231. *The outcry cannot be sincere. All generous men are favourable to the idea of nobility.*

19. **of art.** Artificial, insincere. Burke considers that men do not naturally dislike or envy the nobles. And on the other hand the clinging to privileges tends to secure the permanence of settled and peaceful conditions.

33. **the civil order.** Society as a system involving ranks and gradations.

34. **Corinthian capital.** The highest and fairest rank. The figure here is from architecture. The capital is the top of the column, above the uniform shaft and under the entablature (which includes architrave, frieze and cornice). Classical architecture is in three main kinds—Doric, Ionic and Corinthian. Of these the Corinthian is the finest and most elegant.

35. **Omnis boni.** All of us who are well-disposed always favour nobility: Cicero.

38. **partial propensity.** Instinctive inclination in its favour.

Page 173. I. **giving a body to opinion.** Nobility with its hereditary rank and titles serves as an embodiment of the high regard felt by the nation for the chief makers of its history.

**and permanence.** Opinion thus embodied has a more enduring existence. Without permanent marks of distinction esteem would in individual cases be shortlived, and as a general sentiment less substantial.

2. **It is a sour.** . . . The converse statement.

3. **for the reality.** . . . For the reality of virtue, or for representations thereof such as are found in heroic literature. Envious people cannot appreciate anything noble either in life or in art.

We now reach the closing chapter of the Second Part, and here Burke discusses the character of the French clergy and the treatment they have received. Burke's feelings carry him away from the immediate point to the policy and perils of an irreligious revolution; and the chapter becomes virtually a continuation of the second section of the first chapter of this second part.

Para. 232. *Amongst the clergy there were abuses which ought to have been remedied.*

30. **revised.** Corrected and improved.

34. **meliorating regulation.** A new set of rules and methods which would have improved the church and made it more effective for its work. That was what was wanted.

Para. 233. *The libellers find fault chiefly with the ancients and on their account punish the men of to-day.*

Page 174. 14. **all other genealogies** . . . Referring to the overthrow of the nobility and all feudal distinctions.

15. **pedigree of crimes.** While taking away good derived from ancestors they inflict suffering because of the crimes of predecessors.

17. **fiction of ancestry.** In Europe there is no hereditary priesthood, but predecessors are by a fiction regarded, by these men, as ancestors. And thus the present priesthood are held responsible for ancient things to which they are not related.

Para. 234. *The true way of looking at the matter. Corporate bodies are permanent for the creation and transmission of good.*

37. **periods of our mutual hostilities.** Between the Revolution of 1688 and the close of the American war such hostilities

were frequent ; especially the wars of William and Marlborough, of the Austrian Succession, the Seven Years' war, and the American war.

41. **unjust invasions.** Especially of Edward III., and Henry V.

Para. 235. *On the study of History, its uses and abuses; the causes of troubles and the pretexts and the modes. The way of true wisdom.*

Page 175. 16. **the means of keeping alive.** That is the abuse of history.

24. **troublous storms.** . . . The quotation is from Spenser; *Fairy Queen* 2. VIII., 14, and refers to private life.

26. **These vices.** . . . Pride, ambition &c. Burke traces wars to these passions while plausible reasons, or pretexts, having reference to the public good, are assigned. The removal of the pretexts would do no good and much evil.

Similarly there must be actors, such as kings, priests, parliaments. If any of these be removed the place will be filled by something else. The same power will reappear under a new name. Hence the way of wisdom is to endeavour to eradicate the vices, not the men and not the pretexts.

Page 176. 4. **quantum.** Quantity : lit. how much.

8. **occasional organs.** The persons or kingdoms or offensive bodies ; differing in each generation.

9. **transitory modes.** Wars of religion, or of liberty, or of commerce.

10. **Otherwise you will.** . . . You will have historical knowledge but not practical wisdom. The end cannot be gained by pursuing appearances rather than realities, or by attacking individuals for what is due to general causes.

12. **the same fashion in their.** New generations put forth new pretences and urge them in new ways. It may be persecution at home or war abroad.

17. **the spirit transmigrates.** E.g., the ambitious man or people is restless in the devising of new schemes ; each scheme, or the measures for furthering it, being as the new body which the old spirit animates. When a scheme fails you think the thing is dead, but immediately thereafter the ambition is found to be asserting itself in a new form.

22. **gibbeting the carcass.** Killing the body or form, or, perhaps, exposing it to scorn after it is dead.

**demolishing the tomb.** Apparently to remove all memory of the thing.

**23. ghosts and apparitions.** . . . You think of the thing as dead and an unpleasant memory, while in reality it is very much alive. You are imagining ghosts outside while in your house robbers are active. The metaphors are slightly mixed. Burke has in mind a passage in the New Testament, Luke xi., 24-26.

**25. It is thus with.** . . . This last sentence describes the French revolutionists. They see only the shell or outer appearance of history. They think they are overthrowing intolerance; but while professing abhorrence of this and similar evils they are in reality fostering and sanctioning the same vices in other and perhaps worse methods.

**Para. 236. An illustration.** *The massacre of 1572 has just been acted on the stage to stimulate the fierce passions of the enemies of the church.*

**35. followers of Calvin.** John Calvin (1509-1564) was a Frenchman but lived most of his mature life at Geneva in Switzerland. He and Luther are the two greatest of the Reformers. Calvin was followed chiefly in France, Switzerland, Holland and Scotland while in Germany and Scandinavia the Lutheran type prevailed. The Calvinists were known as the Reformed church; but in France in the 16th century they were called Huguenots.

**Page 177. 9. tragic farce.** The play is called a farce because it is of the nature of caricature, but to Burke the sadness of the subject made it tragic. Properly farce is a species of comedy.

**II. Was this spectacle. . . ?** Burke gives his opinion of the motive, *viz.*, that it was to create hatred not of intolerance but of the priesthood.

**22. variety and seasoning.** Something new and spicy, derived not from the present but from the remote.

**25. the Guises of the day.** The persecuting leaders of the revolution who are thus compared to the Duke of Guise and his family.

**28. to the gallies.** What Burke considers he deserved.

**29. house of correction.** Prison.

**30. Not long after . . .** These players were treated with respect whilst the venerable archbishop of Paris has to take to flight.

**40. Lorraine.** Charles Cardinal of Lorraine (1525-1574) was a member of the Guise family. The whole connection were implicated in the massacre.

Page 178. Para. 237. *True lessons of history: non-retaliation.*

4. **those who will stand . . .** A fine description of the philosophic mind.

6. **the true point of comparison.** To the ordinary man things near are important. The philosopher sees the whole course of history at once, and views things in their true relations.

9. **the spirit and moral quality.** This is the vital and enduring element of history. Accidental aspects disappear, and this only is finally judged. Compare with this phrase Wordsworth's definition of poetry as "the breath and finer spirit" of all knowledge.

21. **inactive atheists.** The epithet is derived from the type of the priests of to-day. Similarly, "practical zealots and . . ." which is applied to the atheists of to-day is derived from the priests of the 16th century. In the course of time the parts are changed.

24. **which in its quiescent . . .** The mere holding of atheistical opinions is a misfortune worse than punishment.

Para. 238. *On defects; and the wisdom of toleration.*

35. **professional faults . . . virtues.** Burke seems to imply that the possession of virtues in an ardent form necessitates the possession of corresponding faults. Thus we speak of the defects of the character or type. Clerical defects are given in the five clauses of next sentence.

Page 179. 10. **violence of toleration.** The violent enforcement of toleration. The phrase is a sort of oxymoron.

Para. 239-240. *The grave faults of clerical leaders in the 16th and 17th centuries.*

14. **the progress of . . .** The increase both in variety and strength. The language is redolent of the 18th century.

17. **is it true . . .?** This long series of interrogations, perhaps arranged as a climax, illustrates the oratorical aspect of Burke's style. He always supposes an audience and endeavours to rouse their interest in his theme.

Para. 241. *The improvement in the clergy should be acknowledged.*

Para. 242. *Burke's own observations; a favourable description.*

Page 180. 34. **one set of men . . . very active.** Sceptics; the literary cabal described above: para. 186.

Page 181. I. **moderate minds.** Free from the party or sectarian spirit which formerly disgraced the priesthood.

2. **seculars, regulars.** The former are the ordinary priests, not bound by special vows and rules; the latter are the monks or members of monastic orders who are governed by the rules of their order. Lat. *regula* a rule.

4. **parochial clergy.** Those in charge of parishes throughout the country. The parish was originally an ecclesiastical division. Gr. *paroikia*, a neighbourhood, *oikos* a house.

18. **liberal and open.** Broad-minded and candid.

19. **insolent, servile.** The evil extremes.

23. **Fenelon.** Cited as one of the finest specimens in the history of the French priesthood. He was archbishop of Cambray and was eminent both in personal character and as an author. In his *Témaque*, founded on the travels of Telemachus he introduces his opinions on the questions of his day. Born 1651, died 1715.

33. **vicars general.** Assistants in the work of his bishopric. Vicar is from *vicarius* a substitute and is akin to *vice* in viceroy. The meaning is nearly the same as that of deputy.

39. **English divines.** Theologians probably of the church of England.

40. **genius.** Spirit, distinguishing character or characteristics. The sentence illustrates Burke's own knowledge of theological learning.

Page 182. I. **Abbe.** A title of theological scholarship in France before the revolution.

Para. 243. *A personal tribute in the day of their trial.*

Para. 244. *All alike are punished, and the new rules degrade the service.*

Page 183. I. **exacted.** Demanded. Burke states the truth that selfish and wicked men are the most ready to accuse others of selfishness or wickedness.

8. **severe, liberal.** There are recognised groups of virtues of which these terms may indicate two. Severe is strict and austere. Liberal may include the qualities of enlightenment, breadth, toleration, sympathy, generosity, liberality.

20. **to favour the vicious.** By treating all alike; the bad as liberally as the good.

22. **pensionary establishment.** The new arrangement of salaries.

29. **nothing of science.** Learned works are produced by scholars whose appointments allow them large leisure.

30. **Gallican.** French. Cf. Anglican, the favourite name for the English establishment.

33. **elective clergy.** Instead of being nominated by patrons or learned men they will be chosen by the votes of a body of electors. Burke imagines that able men will not now come forward, and that those who do wish to be clergymen will have to canvass like the candidates for a municipal election. This is probably amistaken view.

Page 184. 7. **of all religious tenets.** Priests or bishops should be elected by members of their own church. On the other hand it is argued that, if the state supports, the appointment should be made by the general public. If this were carried out there is no guarantee for the necessary conditions of doctrine.

17. **What the jurisdiction.** . . . Burke is referring to the new constitution of the clergy.

Para. 245. *The ultimate object the abolition of Christianity and all religion.*

28. **philosophical fanatics.** The phrase is a contradiction in terms, but Burke means that they are fanatics who pretend to be, but are not, philosophers.

38. **knowledge of the physical.** . . . Three stages of growth to perfection according to the new atheistic ethics.

Page 185. 5. **Civic.** Qualifying for the duties of citizenship.

Para. 246. *Burke trusts that neither of the two chief changes (disendowment and popular election) will ever be introduced into England.*

12. **parochial cures.** Parish incumbencies. A cure is a care or charge of souls. Lat. *cura*.

18. **under kingly and seignoral patronage.** With appointments made by the crown or by nobles. The person nominating was styled patron.

Para. 247. *In France you err from want of deep conviction.*

Page 186. 4. **Burnet.** Gilbert Burnet (1643-1715), afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, was the author of a History of the Reformation and of Memorials of my own Time. He was a friend of King William.

15. **destroying that form.** They destroyed Protestantism.

20. **humour.** Odd, or inconsistent, disposition.

Para. 248. *The English Reformers were sincere, pious and devoted. They would have abhorred your reformers.*

Page 187. Para. 249. *On true toleration; which is abundant in England.*

32. **common enemy.** Unbelief.

Page 188. 3. **good works.** A theological expression.

7. **proscription.** Here referring to loss of home and property.

Para. 250. *On the repudiation of prescriptive right; and subversion of justice.*

13. **deans, chapters.** A dean is the president of a chapter, which is a council of canons and other clergymen connected with a cathedral.

21. **as a precedent in point.** As an example to be exactly followed.

22. **the reason applies.** *i. e.*, the principle of justice.

23. **long parliament.** The Parliament which met in November 1640 and was not dissolved for nineteen years.

35. **prescription.** The confirming of possession by length of time. What grows up unchallenged acquires something of a natural right. Things in nature are as they have been permitted to grow and to remain. There is a proverb that possession is nine-tenths of the law. Domat asserts that the limiting and the defence of prescriptive rights is a fundamental purpose of society and government.

Page 189. 17. **pensioners at pleasure.** Persons receiving pensions according to the good will of the Government. Such pensions may be withdrawn if the feelings or needs of government change.

23. **completely to subvert.** Burke holds this to be involved in the universal use of the assignats which are symbols of plunder.

34. **the good-will of an.** A man purchasing a building pays beyond its value for the good-will; *i. e.*, for the assurance that he will obtain the same customers as his predecessor.

35. **the very shadow of a constructive property.** The language is purposely extreme, the clause being the last of an anticlimax. A constructive property is what may be construed as property; not actual definite property but something which may be so regarded in law, or may in the future yield property. Thus a patron's rights may be regarded as property, inasmuch as their

withdrawal would be accompanied with compensation. The shadow of such property is shadowy indeed.

Page 190. I. **we have never dreamt.** The legislative authority of the sovereign power is unlimited, as there can be no higher power ; but in practice it must be restrained by the moral sense of the nation. The French Assembly are setting aside fundamental laws because they and the people have in a state of political intoxication lost the moral sense.

Para. 251 *Dangers of a proselytising fanaticism ; negotiations with England.*

19. **Anabaptists of Munster.** This name is applied to an extreme party that arose in Germany at the time of the Lutheran Reformation. They are more noted for their political than for their religious opinions. They caused what is known as the Peasants' War.

22. **wild opinions.** They taught a sort of communism.

26. **epidemical fanaticism.** A phrase describing the occasional outbreak (as a disease) of widely-spreading anarchical opinions. The sentences that follow refer to the religious side of this wild propaganda.

Page 191. 6. **Berne.** In Switzerland.

15. **malignant charity.** An oxymoron, or contradiction in terms. What is intended as charity, or love and brotherhood is in Burke's opinion malignant, because it involves injustice to individuals and classes. Malignant was a familiar term of the English civil war, used by the Puritans towards the other side.

22. **standards consecrated . . .** The footnote refers to Nantz where in the festival of the patriotic society (Aug. 1790) a banner was used with the motto "universal compact", and the flags of France and England were combined, with a ribbon containing the words "To the union of England and France." This was reported to the Revolution Society in England by two messengers who were hospitably entertained. 'Rites and mysteries' are terms of religion figuratively applied to the fraternisation of the revolutionists.

Page 192. I. **the power to which . . .** Our king (as advised by his ministers).

3. **federative capacity.** The phrase may mean generally the power of acting as representative and federal head of the nation, or simply the power of making war and peace, and treaties pertaining thereto. These powers are vested not in the parliament but in the sovereign, though the king's ministers are responsible to parliament. Lat. *foedus* a treaty, also a league.

Para. 252. *My fears for the future. Increasing public debts will require either increased taxation or a discontented monied class who will ally themselves with revolutionaries. Property and justice will be imperilled.*

29. **with their springs relaxed.** With vigour and elasticity weakened.

Page 193. 12. **innoxious indolence.** The harmless inactivity of many of the rich.

17. **murmuring under ground.** Discontent of the working classes as yet barely audible.

19. **confederacies.** Unions; alliances.

23. **upon our guard.** Watchful; especially, as next sentence shows, in a moral sense.

27. **tenacious, tender.** Firmly holding to, keenly sensitive regarding. The words are alliterative.

Para. 253. *The plea that the confiscation is a measure of beneficial policy.*

37. **standing.** Permanent, unchanging. This sentence is a frequently quoted maxim.

Page 194. Para. 254. *Man who enter long recognised professions should not be degraded and disgraced through change in popular opinions.*

14. **that character.** Their professional character, i. e., the priesthood.

Para. 255. *Such action is unwise as well as unjust. There is the middle way of reform. Burke's conception of statesmanship.*

24. **policy.** Here defined as public benefit; the wisdom or expediency of the thing.

Page 195. 2. **the mere alternative.** Either of the two alternatives.

3. **Spartam. . . .** You have obtained possession of Sparta; adorn her. But the Greek original means, rule her.

9. **carte blanche.** White paper, a clean sheet. The State cannot act as if there was no history behind, no vested interests and no mental habits and inclinations. Compare the phrase *tabula rasa* (blank table) used in discussions regarding the mind.

15. **make the most of.** Explained in next paragraph.

Para. 256. *A great resource destroyed by incapable men.*

28. **power.** Something that will produce great results. From the use of the term in mechanics.

29. **purchase.** Used of the mechanical powers, the lever, &c.

31. **In the monastic.** . . . Burke argues that here there was, both in men and money, a great opportunity for a resourceful statesman to benefit his country by. Some high use might have been found, both for the monks and for their wealth, in keeping with the original aims and purposes.

Page 196. 4. **The winds blow.** . . . There are seasons of inspiration when such things come into being. They cannot be produced at other times. Burke appropriates the words of Christ regarding spiritual influences. John III. 8.

5-6. **products, instruments.** Wisdom cannot create them but it may use them. The words are skilfully balanced and contrasted.

8. **nature or of chance.** Both terms express the mysteriousness of their origin. So in a sonnet Keats speaks of the "magic hand of chance" where the reference is to poetic inspiration.

12. **long views.** Power of seeing into or arranging for the future. So Bacon speaks of longanimity.

25. **any power, growing wild.** The words imply that the monastic system was like a rank growth and needed fresh culture and direction; but there were abundant elements of life and utility. Another comparison from physical science is now made.

37. **until contemplative ability** . . . A fine description of man's power over nature, written before the days of telegraphs and railways. Contemplative and practic (or theoretic and experimental) denote the two sides of the scientific mind.

Page 197. 13. **sell their tools.** A scornful description of incapacity. Cf. in second sentence "apt instruments."

Para. 257. *On superstition, and the attitude of the wise. Contrast with irreligion.*

14. **but the.** . . What the objector says.

15. **their very principle.** The monastic idea of retirement from the world.

35. **a resource.** Religious faith. In many cases exposure of the superstition would be followed by loss of faith.

36. **the body of** . . Note Burke's definition of the essential elements of religion.

40. **the rest is our own.** All add something, which may be injurious like superstition or helpful.

Page 198. 2. **not admirers.** Not readily carried away by feeling. The idea is taken from Horace who is expressing a stoical mood, and commanding the love of virtue only. *Epistles* 1st Book, VI.

**Munera Terrae.** Gifts of the earth; *i.e.*, things having imperfections of this world. The phrase has in Horace its natural meaning, the produce of the earth. The same epistle, line 6.

4. **Wisdom is . . .** Wisdom avoids the extremes of approbation and of censure.

6. **the rival follies . . .** The bigots on either side contend with each other and instigate the people to take sides in their quarrels. Abstract for concrete. The figure may also be regarded as personification.

II. **would be neuter.** Prefers to be on neither side. But if he is compelled to choose he will prefer superstition to atheism. The clauses that follow illustrate the rhetorical arts of antithesis, balance, parallelism and perhaps climax.

Para. 258. 31. **postpone.** The question is dealt with in the last section or chapter of the book.

Para. 259. *A speculation in political economy.*

39. **surplus forms the income.** Burke is referring to produce of land. Tenants are able to produce more than their needs. The surplus they pay to the landowner as rent. His income consists of the rents collected on his estate.

Page 199. 2. **spring of labour.** The luxury or sumptuousness of the landowner gives employment to many and thus promotes industry.

3. **The only concern.** Burke here denies the right of the State to control the relations of landlord and tenant, except in two points. The first is a requirement that the capital of accumulated rents should be spent on the estate. This is a condemnation of what is called absentee landlordism. Many nobles lived at court. So of Ireland many landlords lived in London.

Para. 260. *Whether monkish possession of capital is not more advantageous than many other arrangements.*

18. **some rational assurance . . .** If property is taken from one party and given to another there must be solid assurance that the new landlords are better than the old.

28. **a politic expenditure.** A mode of living beneficial to the country.

31. "**are lazy.**" This is the accusation. Burke says there are many whose employment is no better or may be worse. Burke sets aside the sophistry of the political economists that everything is to be judged by its material products. There are moral and spiritual considerations.

37. **innumerable servile . . .** Of these in the old world the chief was mining. In Burke's day the increase of manufactures led to an increase of unhealthy occupations. Burke considers these far more unjustifiable. But to stop them would be to "impede the wheel of circulation" and thus to affect numerous classes and produce unknown results.

Page 200. 15. **despotism of fancy.** Referring to the great sums spent by the fashionable world on dress and ornaments and other modes of splendour. It is a despotism because people feel bound to follow fashion and the requirements of gay society. But even the imperious queens of fashion promote distribution of the capital of estates.

19. **distribution.** The movement of money from one to another throughout a community.

22. **us lay loiterers.** Inactive laymen, amongst whom Burke classes many politicians.

Para. 261. *A comparison to the advantage of monastic institutions. Rhetorical interrogations.*

38. **through the accumulation . . .** An eulogy on intellectual interests.

Page 201. 3. **seem to extend . . .** So we speak of the creative genius of a poet or artist. In the works of great painters and sculptors great ideas are embodied; so that the effect may be regarded as an enlargement of natural existence.

7. **specimens of nature.** *I. e.,* in natural history ; zoology, botany, mineralogy ; forming museums. Family, is a technical term for a large group of allied individuals. A class is a larger group. Classes, orders, families are in descending order, and are all larger than a genus.

**disposition.** Arrangement. Burke means that by comparisons and classification new laws of the biological or physical world may be discovered.

14. **inconstant sport of . . .** Referring to the frequent changes in the world of fashion and amusement. Cf. the 'despotism of fancy' in last paragraph.

17. **Does not the sweat . . .** Another comparison setting forth the dark side of the active world.

26. **opera-houses.** Theatres for musical dramas.

28. **obelisks.** Monumental columns narrowing towards the top and ending in a point. Gr. Paris is full of monuments of national glory.

**Champ de Mars.** A fashionable part of Paris where there are several monuments. Literally, field of Mars, (Lat. *Campus Martius*); but there is no field now though there is open space.

29. **olive and the vine.** The former is an ever-green tree from the fruit of which olive oil is derived. The oil is used in cooking as well as for other purposes. From the fruit of the vine, *i. e.*, grapes, wine is derived. Both vine and olive are abundant in France.

31. **whom the fictions . . .** Burke does not object to the undue reverence shown to monks and priests.

35. **useless domestics.** Referring to the unnecessary number of servants kept in extravagant establishments.

38. **national cockades.** These are ribbons or badges worn on the hat; at the time of the Revolution in special abundance.

**petites maisons.** Little houses and little suppers.

Page 202. Para. 262. *If we tolerate worse why do we interfere with the better and put it on the side of the worse?*

Para. 263. *Moreover the church corporations were more easily reformed than private establishments are.*

19. **public direction.** A new direction as to mode of life and expenditure, given by public authority.

26. **politic.** For the public welfare.

Para. 264. *On church estates held officially by individuals.*

29. **canons.** Clergymen attached to cathedrals or to churches where there are a dean and chapter.

30. **abbots.** Usually the head of an abbey, here in a special sense. See above.

32. **can any philosophic . . .** Burke is defending an arrangement by which some estates are held not by birth but as pertaining to high office and wishes to know why the theorists object to a mode that seems more rational than inheritance.

Page 203. I. **renovation.** A noble family become poor may recover itself through the temporary possession of such an estate. Bishops were often chosen from the nobility.

2. to the lowest . . . elevation. Others chosen on the ground of scholarship or ability were able to raise the social status of their connection. The clauses that follow set forth some of the ways in which such persons benefit society.

[10. trust for charity. For the benefit of the poor. It is understood that the revenues of a bishop are to be partly spent on such objects.

24. in mortmain. Lit. in the dead hand; *i.e.*, inalienably, as is usually the case with corporations. These estates change with new appointments.

Burke contends that some such estates, giving opportunities to the specially deserving, serve a good purpose though the existence of a large number might involve abuses.

### PART III.

In this part Burke's eyes are wholly on France, and on what has been done there by the revolution. He calls it "some remarks upon your establishments." He discusses various aspects of the new constitution and administration under the following heads.

Chap. I. para. 265-275. Introductory, laying down the true principles of statesmanship.

Chap. II. para. 276-327. On the supreme power; or the new Legislature, identified with the National Assembly. Modes of election are discussed, and means of unity.

Chap. III. para. 328-335. On the Executive; or the King and ministers. This includes the greater part of what is called Administration.

Chap. IV. para. 336-345. On the new Judicature.

Chap. V. para. 346-367. On the Army.

Chap. VI. para. 368-393. On the Financial Policy.

Chap. II. V. and VI. are more fully discussed because in these the policy and effects of the Revolution are most seen.

Para. 394-398. Concluding remarks on the fundamental problem, and personal.

Para. 265. *Personal explanations.*

Page 204. 5. *my original purpose.* Burke's design was not formed with sufficient definiteness, and grew with occasion.

Consequently parts overlap and there is a certain amount of repetition. The comparison with the British constitution is dropped after the discussion of the Church and Monarchy in the Second Part. His mind became more and more concentrated on what was being done in France.

**I6. establishments.** Here almost in the sense of governing and administrative departments.

**for another time what I . . .** These three branches of the British constitution should have been handled in the middle part. Burke is conscious of the omission, and also that the subject is quite distinct from what he has in view in the following pages. Accordingly these parts are deferred for a subsequent volume. The occasional writer however must follow the course of events ; and Burke's subsequent writings are chiefly on France. The *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs* is the nearest approach to a fulfilment of the purpose here indicated.

Para. 266. *Justification of free criticism.*

**35. opinion.** Established or recognised ideas.

Para. 267. *The National Assembly is an unauthorised association of men.*

Page 205. **5. assumed another . . .** They were one of three subordinate estates. They have assumed sole power. They are not formed by any law of the constitution but by their own declaration and intimidation.

**II. the instructions.** Instructions as to reform of grievances were given at the elections. These have been departed from.

**17. near divisions.** Small majorities. A vote carried by a majority is construed as a vote of the Assembly. In reality it is not ; and therefore, in argument, it cannot be so recognised. We must look to the arguments on both sides.

Para. 268. *Neither are they justified by necessity.*

**24. anticipate.** Give now the benefit due to long standing.

**30. cogent expediency.** The compulsion due to the public interest ; necessity.

**37. sinister practices.** Forms of intrigue. Sinister is left-handed.

Page 206. **2. prima fronte.** At first view, or aspect.

**3. apology.** Defence, explanation.

**8. criticise on.** Pass judgment on. Not good English.

Para. 269. *In obtaining power they have followed familiar artifices, but in exercising it they have been guided by speculation.*

26. **iota.** The smallest amount. Iota is the name of the smallest Greek letter (*i*).

Para. 270. *They have been confident and reckless.*

Page 207. 13. **empirics.** Those who trust to experience without scientific education; used often of quacks in medicine. Gr. *peira* trial.

Para. 271. *The French leaders are orators, but not large-minded thinkers. The folly of evading difficulty.*

17. **parts.** Ability.

Page 208. 8. **Pater ipse.** The Father Himself willed that the way of cultivation should be not easy. Virgil, *Georgic* I. 121.

II. **antagonist is our helper.** The sentence may be called an epigram. It is superficially self-contradictory and therefore surprising, but fundamentally true and so may be called an apophthegm.

16. **nerves of understanding,** Strength of mind.

17. **tricking.** Deceptive.

28 **eluded.** Evaded.

30. **labyrinth.** A perplexing intricacy. Gr.

Para. 272. *To destroy old errors is easy; and to set up something opposite.*

Page 209. 20. **criticism is. . . .** The faults of what is untried are not obvious, and the sanguine imagine that their devices will succeed.

Para. 273. *The problem of statesmanship, gradual attainment of harmonious ends; a ruling principle.*

29. **a vigorous . . .** Qualities required and how they are to be exercised.

Page 210. 26. **full of sensibility.** Explained in next sentence.

30. **intuitive glance.** Immediate vision. The statesman may in a lucid moment discover the object to be aimed at, but the attainment must be slow and cautious. Compare Arnold's partially similar lines—

Tasks in hours of insight willed,  
Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled.

Page 211. 17. **anomalies.** What is abnormal or irregular.

**contending principles.** Conflicting ideas, tendencies and wishes. The reference is mainly to the different opinions of different persons or classes.

**21. in composition.** Where multitudinous claims and aspects are harmoniously adjusted.

**Where the great . . .** The future also is to be considered.

**30. ruling principle.** Something that while ruling is capable of adaptation or of development.

**32. plastic.** Capable of being moulded ; of being modified in shape or in direction : also, actively, capable of moulding other material, formative. The term belongs to sculpture and allied arts where form is given. Gr. *plasso* I form. Here the active meaning, as well as the passive, is required. **Nature** may mean substance or quality. A plastic nature is one which possesses the power of producing something higher.

Para. 274. *Your men substitute for ability sensationalism.*

**36. presiding.** Same as ruling; continuing and directing.

**37. prolific energy.** Energy manifested in various ways and changing circumstances, but in accordance with the ruling principle. Explanation of 'plastic.'

Page 212. 4. **alchymist and empiric.** Both words mean quack. The alchymist claimed to be able to turn metals into gold or to give long life. They are satirised in Jonson's play the *Alchemist*. The modern word is chemist; the prefix being the Arabic article.

**13. buffooneries of satirists.** Satirists deliberately caricature and make ludicrous; but the French statesmen have accepted their descriptions as facts.

**21. paradoxical.** Contradictory to appearance or to probability; originally, to received opinion.

**25. the fair and good.** Beauty and goodness, both referring to conduct. These men have no models or ideals of virtue in their mind, and do not care to meditate thereon.

**31. complexional.** Constitutional; the original meaning.

**34. quadrimanous.** Monkey-like; literally four-handed.

**35. the paradoxes of eloquent . . .** As in the case of Rousseau who made startling statements in order to rouse attention.

**40. their taste.** Their skill in literature.

Page 213. 5. **school paradoxes.** Extreme sayings of the Stoicks in their praise of virtue, such as that the wise man is a king, or a god. Cato made himself ludicrous by acting on sayings that were not seriously meant. The reference is to Cicero's oration *pro L. Murena*. Chap. xxix.

10. **pede nudo Catonem.** The first two words mean 'with bare foot.' The reference is to external imitators; men who have the outside manner but not the spirit or character of Cato. The quotation is from Horace, 19th Epistle of First Book. The reference is to Cato of (Utica 95-46 B. C.).

**Mr. Hume.** David Hume (1711-1776), philosopher and historian.

16. **heathen mythology.** Referring chiefly to the ancient world—Greece, Rome etc., what is known as classical poetry.

17. **giants . . .** Romantic poetry, as in the literature of the later Middle Ages, and finally in Spenser.

26. **unlooked for strokes.** Bold ideas and startling statements.

28. **lucid intervals.** An expression used of the insane.

31. **incredulity . . . implicit faith.** Another instance of the apparently contradictory; of the nature of epigram, though too heavy and solemn to be reckoned wit.

Para. 275. *Has ability been shown equal to the grand designs?*

36. **regenerate constitutions.** Such was the talk of the French deputies. Burke, in the remainder, is to pronounce judgment on their capacity for the assumed task.

We now come to the first of the great establishments which have been reconstructed. This is the National Assembly which possesses legislative power and supreme authority. Burke discusses the manner of its election, and its relation to the Governments of the Departments; also by what cementing principles national unity is to be maintained. Finally he complains of the want of a Second Chamber or any arrangement of control.

Para. 276. *Burke is to consider the spirit, tendency and capacity of the National Assembly; also its self-consistency.*

Page 214. 13. **Sovereign and presiding.** Supreme and overruling. **Model** is design, or plan. Burke assumes that the National Assembly is sovereign. In the preceding sentence the same body is called the legislature.

16. **their title.** The value of their claims; their acquired right.

17. **For the plan itself.** Including the mode of election and representation.

27. **popular commonwealth.** A state ruled by the people.

*Para. 277. Old systems and new. The latter being theoretic and untrammelled should be perfect.*

37. **correctives.** Counter-balancing arrangements. By "aberations from theory" Burke evidently means such departures from an ideal constitution as require to be met otherwise. Constitutions have grown with events and circumstances. Consequently there are many adjustments.

Page 215. 4. **theories are rather drawn.** Students of Political philosophy study successful governments, and therefrom deduce the causes; just as a critic derives from great epics or dramas the rules of composition.

II. **react upon the primitive.** When new rules at variance with the original design are seen to improve matters there may be a resulting tendency to modify the original design.

15. **At worst.** When there is no question of improving the constitution it is still possible to correct what goes wrong. The metaphor here is from navigation.

23. **no way embarrassed.** They ruthlessly carry out their will, therefore their system should be perfect.

*Para. 278. The triple basis, and the territorial divisions.*

30. **local and general legislature.** Local government is the expression used for government in limited districts as distinguished from the central or general government. The former here refers to the Departments, the latter to the National Assembly.

*Para. 279. Geometrical division and subdivision.*

Page 216. 10. **theodolite.** A trigonometrical instrument.

22. **system of Empedocles and Buffon.** System of scientific gradation or division. Buffon, 1707-1788, was the author, of a great work entitled *Natural History, General and Particular*. He pointed out that the present condition of the earth and animal world was the outcome of successive changes which could still be traced. Empedocles reasoned similarly of physical phenomena.

*Para. 280. Variations in regard to population and wealth.*

*Para. 281. The inconsistency of requiring from voters a money qualification; natural right being ignored.*

Page 217. 20. **juridical metaphysics.** Theoretical determination of rights. Things might now be decided by arithmetic, but they do not adhere to their theories.

27. **But soft. . . .** Pope's *Moral Essays* IV., 129. The words are quoted to emphasise the qualifications of equality of rights.

31. **many degrees.** Referring to the qualifications.

32. **some stages.** Referring to the intermediate elections (instead of, as in England, direct election by large constituencies.) See next para.

Page 218. Para. 282. *The Stages; the cantons elect for the communes, they elect for the Department; and the Department deputies elect for the National Assembly.*

*Also three qualifying barriers, viz., contributions of the value of three days' and ten days' labour, and of a mark of silver.*

Page 219. Para. 283. *The inconsistency of a property qualification when the question is of population.*

Para. 284. *Difficulties in regard to the third basis. Contribution to revenues; settled not by regard to rich persons, but to the wealth of districts.*

Page 220. 7. **Just reciprocal proportion,** . . . The richer cities have larger representation. But the individual citizens of any city have all the same voting power.

Para. 285. *The solution is unsatisfactory, since the citizens of different cities have different privileges.*

Para. 286. *And the arrangement is not such as to benefit rich persons; for while the district is favoured the voting is democratic.*

Page 221. 16. **as a support to dignity or as security . . .** These are the two advantages that might have been conferred on wealth.

17. **aristocratic mass.** The body of wealth in the Department.

27. **some class.** A separate electorate could be formed of persons whose wealth amounted to a certain sum. Servius Tullius was the sixth of the kings of Rome. He endeavoured to improve the position of the middle class, and to give influence to property as well as to birth.

Para. 287. *Aggravations for the rich.*

Page 222. 22. **eighteen livres.** The pay of a deputy. In England Members of Parliament are not paid.

Para. 288. *Further jealousies between the Departments are likely to follow.*

36. **equipoise.** Due balance. The system gives to the weaker no special protection ; it only gives the wealthier the means of oppression.

Para. 289. *Estimation by direct contribution only is another element of inequality. The whole matter of a contribution basis is difficult and incapable of equitable settlement.*

Page 223. II. **these aristocratic masses.** The estimated wealth of the richer provinces (or departments).

**duties on consumption.** On articles of consumption, or commodities.

15. **discovers wealth.** Reveals wealth, *i.e.*, of districts. Direct contributions on income are easily levied in the case of professional men but not so easily in the case of business men. Such taxes do not generally reach the whole population.

26. **independent sovereign bodies.** *I.e.*, if each department was supreme in itself (as was the case in Switzerland), then the mass system might be fairer.

27. **federative treasury.** A joint treasury ; the departments being leagued together, and each paying its quota into the central treasury.

29. **many impositions running . . .** Taxes which men as individuals had to pay wherever they were. *E.g.*, there might be one duty on tobacco for the whole of France.

Page 224. I. **its mass is considered.** The wealth of some cities is over-estimated on account of export trade passing through them. So Paris is over-estimated because of the landed aristocracy who spend their fortunes in it.

Para. 290. *This part is not yet settled, and they don't seem eager to settle it. In any case there will be confusion and controversy.*

26. **latent policy.** Burke suggests that the Assembly is lengthening its existence (*i.e.*, deferring new elections) by the artifice of delay.

Page 225. Para. 291-296. *Illustrations of inconsistency and contradiction. These specially show themselves when in the communes the three bases are all made applicable.*

Para. 297-8. *No intelligent design is discernible.*

Page 226. 39. **between mass and mass.** Between one Department and another.

Page 227. 3. **negative qualities.** Since Burke has proved that what has least population may have most votes. Negative thus means, causing deprivation.

7. one consistent whole. The true requirement, and the mark of statesmanship.

Para. 299. *The great defect: there is no reference to the nature or welfare of men.*

21. **Sightly vision.** Theoretical constitutions are things of show, not adapted to the world.

24. **anything moral or anything politic.** Anything adapted to the character of men and the good of the state. Politic is what is nationally expedient.

26. **Hominem . . .** They do not taste of man. They are abstract, and do not answer to the needs and sentiments and feelings of human life.

Para. 300-I. *On the Departments and the abandonment of national unity. Each department will tend to become a separate republic.*

32. **genealogy.** Mode of election; parentage or derivation from the primary assemblies.

Page 228. 7. **general congress.** This is a description of the National Assembly. Its members are delegates (or ambassadors) from the independent Departments. France is a federation of republics.

13. **bodies politic.** Bodies constituting a state, or representing a state. The Assembly is only an association. Its legislators have divided their country into several sections.

Para. 302. *France has been treated as ancient conquerors treated the countries they overthrew.*

34. **pontiffs.** Chief priests. Lat. *pontifex*.

40. **sincere friends to.** Ironical mockery.

Page 229. Para. 303. *In the new system men who have to act together will be strangers to one another, whereas common knowledge and aims and affections are essential to a well governed state.*

The footnote from Tacitus is: Not as formerly were entire legions planted with tribunes and centurions and soldiers of corresponding ranks so as to form a republic by agreement and affection; but men unknown to each other, of different companies, without a ruler, without mutual regard, as if belonging to another race of men, were suddenly collected into a mass, as a number of people rather than as a colony.

Page 230. I. **facies Hippocratica.** The face of one dying in consumption; literally the face as described by Hippocrates.

Hippocrates (about 460 to 357 B. C.) was a very famous physician, author of the theory of the four humours, &c.

**physiognomy.** Special cast of countenance. The term is more usually employed of the art of reading faces.

Para. 304. *The superiority of ancient legislators.*

9, II. **with men, with citizens.** The first aspect requires a knowledge of human nature, the second of civil and social life. Again the second aspect influences the first so as to produce diversities in human nature due to the various circumstances of life and occupation. On account of these great diversities the ancients classified men and granted privileges for protection.

Page 231. 2. **economist, disposer and shepherd.** Manager, arranger, and guardian. The figure of a shepherd or pastor was of frequent usage in the old world. A shepherd of the people should guide, protect, and provide for them.

3. **subliming.** Sublimating; *i. e.*, changing from the solid into the airy condition.

7. **Montesquieu.** The reference is to his *Spirit of the Laws*, Book II. Chap. 2. The legislators are the early statesmen of Greece and Rome.

10. **above themselves.** Above their ordinary powers. Caste division is a form of classification carried to excess in being stereotyped.

20. **homogeneous mass.** A mass of one kind of material; *i. e.*, possessing throughout the whole body equality of rights, and having no distinctions of rank or grade.

21. **amalgama.** The mass is an amalgam because it is produced by the combination and confusion of many things. The term corresponds with "alchemical."

23. **loose counters.** Separate individuals, with no power or authority except in the reckoning of numbers. In any arithmetical number the value of a figure depends on its relative place: it may indicate units or tens or thousands.

27. **troll of their categorical table.** The repetition of their categories. The words contain a scornful allusion to their metaphysics or logic. The categorical table is the list of categories or predicaments given in the Aristotelian logic. They indicate what can be *predicative* of any object. Besides substance and quantity (which are taken account of by the French) there are quality, relation, action, passion, place, time, situation, condition. That is to say, the French neglect the main characteristics and conditions of human life.

31. **catechism of metaphysics.** The phrase suggests a handbook of instruction in which the main principles of metaphysics are summed up.

Para. 305. *Advantages of classes and ranks: a check on despotism, a security of permanence. A prophecy of the future.*

Page 232. 19. **dynasty.** A succession of sovereigns of the same family Gr. *dynastes* a lord. Had the Napoleonic empire remained France would have had another dynasty.

22. **the most completely arbitrary.** Because masses of men, without ranks and organisation, cannot ordinarily check policy.

Para. 306. *The revolutionaries know this, and seek to perpetuate their power through the fear of complete disorganisation. Thus they hope that ev'n a returning despot will not venture to destroy their Assembly.*

41. **offspring.** The constitution they have made.

Page 233. Para. 307. *M. de Calonne's book shows that some leaders are actually aiming at a confederacy of independent republics.*

Para. 308. *This explains their minute regard for exact equality; while on a true system each member should represent the whole country, and minor details of arrangement are unimportant.*

Page 234. 5. **Some standing authority.** There ought to be a central continuous authority, apart from Parliament (which has its prorogations and dissolutions). That authority in England is the government (or King's ministers) often called the Crown; but in France the Assembly has been made supreme.

8. **originated and to which it was pointed.** Compare below what is said of England: The government is the point of reference, the centre of our unity, the trustee for the whole. On the one hand Parliament, as a legislative body and as granting supplies, assists the government. On the other hand Parliament acts for the country as a control on the government. The government exists not independently but as the king's ministers approved by Parliament. It is the central active force. And it is, Burke says, the unifying point.

15. **a government complete in all.** . . . That is, the work of administration in the various departments is complete apart from Parliament. To be a member of Parliament is not to have access to the work of any department.

22. **no action and no existence.** Parliament can only meet when summoned by the king. The House of Commons can of itself make no law. The co-operation of King, lords and commons is requisite. The Commons is the **representative** part.

25. **This government of reference.** Burke here slightly changes his ground. He now considers the House of Commons as a part of the government of reference; which is true inasmuch as the King's ministers can hold office only with the approval and support of the commons. This united government is entrusted with the well-being of the whole country.

38. **The very inequality.** Here we see some of Burke's reasons for opposing electoral reform. Each member of Parliament considers not his own constituency so much as the good of the whole. This point arose as a practical question when the electors of Bristol desired Burke to change his policy. He refused to take instructions from his constituents.

Page 235. Para. 309. *On the French method of election through intermediate bodies.*

21. **Ambassador of a state.** Or, delegate from the assembly of the department. This, according to Burke, makes a fundamental change in the spirit of the election. The man is not in touch with the people, and does not make their interests his primary study.

Page 236. 4. **perpetual dilemma.** This term of Logic is used when there are serious difficulties attendant upon either of two alternative courses. Here they must either accept a situation in which the deputy is not a representative, or they must submit to confusion and intrigue (giving the final judgment to the multitudes whom they distrust).

Para. 310. *The true purposes of election are frustrated; there being no personal choice based on a knowledge of fitness, and no power of calling to account.*

29. **for two years more.** To prevent the evils of ambition the French require that after two years each member shall retire for two years. This breaks the continuity of a political life and must prevent any great accomplishment.

32. **Limbus Patrum.** Limbo of the Fathers. *Limbus* means edge. A phrase of the Middle Ages describing a region where the souls of Jewish saints were supposed to be kept till the day of their deliverance. Here used of a place and period of inactivity.

33. **go into dock.** The comparison is with ships after a long voyage.

37. **like chimney-sweepers.** Some chimneys could be ascended only by little boys, who as they grew in size became unfit,

39. **Superficial . . . and interrupted.** The double character of the legislators of the future.

Para. 311. *Evils of the system. No responsibility.*

Page 237. II. **this elective constitution.** Referring here to the deputies of the Department (the third set of electors); though the phrase may also indicate the entire system.

16. **To call . . .** As there is no proper responsibility to the changing Department, still less is there to the next lower body.

Para. 312. *Are there any other grounds and guarantees of union and cohesion?*

18. **their confederations . . .** Burke dismisses the grand feasting and fraternity as things cunningly organised.

Page 238. Para. 313. *The cement derived from the Confiscation.*

6. **tempering.** Mutual adjustment.

15. **confederate republics.** The Departments. These will have difficulties both external and internal. Of course the value of the paper will fall if the lands are insufficient, and all negotiations will be affected.

18. **sink.** Put an end to, as no longer necessary. The lands will then have yielded the full value represented by the assignats, and real value (in land or money) will have been got for them. A strong motive for maintaining the existing system will then cease to act. People will feel independent.

Para. 314. *The managers of this system of circulation will in every Department form an oligarchy.*

33. **substance, medium.** These terms indicate the two aspects, both of colossal importance, which must make the question of finance paramount. Substance means the supposed substance, that on which administration is based.

Para. 315. *In England the money system is powerful but in France there are intensifying elements.*

Page 239. I. **voluntary dealing.** All bank notes are voluntary, and banks are private corporations except that Government has special relations with the Bank of England.

8. **another member.** The power of continual transformation rendering the value of land very variable.

19. **incorporates.** A figure from demoniacal possession. The evil spirit gets embodied in the land.

21. **volatilised.** Assumes a state of unnatural activity and changefulness. Lat. *volo* I fly. The term is usually indicative of evaporation.

25. **the representative of.** The property representative of.

30. **Latonian kindness.** According to the myth Delos was a floating island until, in return for allowing Latona to give birth upon it to her "twin-born progeny," Apollos and Artemis, it was fixed firm. The opposite process has happened to the land in France now volatilised.

33. **oras et . . .** Around the coasts and shores. The words are quoted from the Third Book of the *Aeneid* where Virgil gives the credit to Apollo.

Para. 316. *The money-jobbers will not make good farmers.*

40. **holy bishop.** Talleyrand, afterwards a famous ambassador. The epithet is ironical.

Page 240. 5. **not a tutor of . . .** The methods are very different. Agriculture requires patience and honest methods. A usurer is one who exacts high rates of interest.

11. **Dii** . . . To the immortal gods I sow. Quoted from Cicero, *On Old Age*. The meaning is that the cultivator of land must trust and work for the future. Some fruits take many years to grow. The methods of those wanting immediate results may be ruinous to land.

13. **whilst death . . .** The farmer who said so was near the close of his life.

16. **Caisse.** Bank of Discount.

20. **Carthusian.** The name is derived from Chartreuse in France. The order, allied to the Benedictine, was founded by S. Bruno in 1086.

34. **proto-type.** The first great representative of the kind, a character in Horace.

35. **Beatus ille.** Happy he. The stanza that follows means that he very soon tires of a country life: "When the usurer Alphius, now about to become a rustic, had said this he brought home all his money on the Ides. On the Calends (first of next month) he seeks to put it out again."

Page 241. I. **Caisse d' Eglise.** The bank (or money) of the Church.

Para. 317. *The introduction of the gambling spirit; effects thereof.*

12. **metamorphose.** Transform. Gr. *morphe* form.

28. **in the Mississippi.** A French company having a monopoly of trade with the Mississippi.

29. **South Sea.** The South Sea Bubble, a similar enterprise in England in the reign of George I.

30. **as in lotteries.** These are individual things for a particular purpose. In France the gambling will enter into all life; and will be continuous because money will be constantly changing in value.

Page 242. 18. **not the providence.** . . . The only use of the paper will be to gain by it as soon as possible. To accumulate what may soon be worthless would be to show not foresight but foolishness. A jack-daw is a small bird of the crow species.

Para. 318. *In gambling the majority are duped; and in this case the country people will be cheated by the townsmen. Strife will ensue.*

Para. 319. *Country people will be at the mercy of towns-people who are accustomed to combine.*

Page 243. 7. **falling.** Causing to fall.

8. **freehold.** Property held free except for obligations to the crown.

13. **burghers.** Those who have rights of voting &c. in a burgh. These and not the country people will have power; and they will be ruled by the monied directors.

Page 244. 4. **to mortgage.** To assign land as security for another debt contracted.

Para. 320. *The final result, a base oligarchy.*

36. **Serbonian bog.** The lake Serbonis, in Egypt, east of the Nile and near the coast; at one time very treacherous ground. Burke quotes from Milton who is describing Chaos (*P. L. II.* 592):

A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog  
Betwixt Damia and Mount Casius old,  
Where armies whole have sunk.

Para. 321. *Emotions.*

Page 245. 5. **false splendours.** As in the case of Cromwell and others. A certain halo of glory surrounded them.

Para. 323-4. *The second binding principle; a powerful capital.*

27. **for the cause.** . . . To secure the supremacy other parts have been disorganised.

Page 246. I. **Paris is . . .** A summary of the advantages which may enable the city to maintain supremacy.

24. **a system of general weakness.** Because bonds of union and affection are destroyed.

28. **Gascons . . .** Gascony, Picardy, Brittany and Normandy are provinces of France. Originally they were distinct peoples. The new divisions disregard the old boundaries. The result will be that the old names will cease but no new unity will be established.

36. **Chequer No. 71.** A checquer is a square as on a chess-board. Burke is showing how a district may now be described.

38. **cold relation.** Unaffectionate relative.

41. **inns.** Intermediate stages (between the family and the State).

Page 247. 8. **elemental training.** These local affections constitute a rudimentary training for the higher duties of social and public and national life.

Para. 325. *On the Assembly itself. Its power is unlimited, and there is no controlling or modifying body.*

31. **of legislative competency.** Whatever they think they have a right to do that they do. They assume power and infallibility and do not hesitate.

33. **from the exceptions . . .** What has been done in some very extreme case they do in ordinary circumstances.

37. **will be purged of.** At the next elections the unpopular minority will be got rid of.

Para. 326. *The need of a revising Chamber.*

Page 248. 13. **Senate.** The term was used of the patrician assembly of ancient Rome, originally the only legislative body. In modern times it is used of an Upper House, either of nobles or of more experienced men. The House of Lords is of this nature though it is not called a senate. The term is used in America and also on the Continent. Lat. *senex* old.

18. **without something . . .** The advantages thereof.

24. **as a council.** In England the king is advised by a privy council, which in practice is the ministry. In former times there was a closer connection between the sovereign and the nobility.

26. **very essence of a republican.** As the only way of allowing education, experience, wealth, and rank or hereditary advantages to have any special influence in the management of the country.

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28. **middle place**. . . . Something intermediate between an assembly such as that in France, and the executive government. It would have a certain power of revising the orders issued to the executive, or the laws enacted.

32. **your Solons**. Your wise legislators. Antonomasia and Irony.

The next chapter deals with the Executive, that is to say, the power which, in obedience to the Assembly, controls the work of administration and the execution of the laws. This chapter is brief and treats mainly of the position assigned to the king, which is in every respect a position of humiliation. Burke also complains of the expense of two vast establishments of service.

Para. 327. *The position of the king; a mere instrument devoid of power.*

36. **executive power**. Power that executes or carries into effect ; this may include the whole work of administration.

38. **to be a machine**. The Assembly has assumed for itself all deliberative function and made its king a mere servant; not only so but it has thrown on him unpleasant duties which should be assigned to subordinates.

Page 249. 3. **a channel**. He must submit to the Assembly reports, despatches, and such information as will guide their decisions.

6. **exclusive**. The House of Commons takes its information only from ministers. It can put questions regarding public statements.

14. **of intelligence**. Of giving information.

Para. 328. *Regarding legal jurisdiction.*

22. **fountain of justice**. The phrase used to denote the fact that the king appoints the persons who act for him as judges.

27. **public prosecutor**. This is the other line referred to. The office of attorney-general, who has the highest rank on this side, is as important and dignified as that of any judge. Such offices the revolution has placed under the Assembly and not under the Crown.

33. **bumbailiffs** . . . Inferior bailiffs and other officers of courts of justice.

41. **power of originating.** The power of instituting a prosecution which belongs to the public prosecutor.

Page 250. 2. **of suspension . . .** Power of reprieving or modifying sentences is an important part of the royal prerogative.

5. **remove the stigma.** Referring to a vote of the National Assembly asserting rights. Burke suggests that low offices were dignified because they were to be put under the King. Stigma is a mark of disgrace. Gr.

*Para. 329. On the political side or general administration.*

19. **magistracy.** Office; the classical usage.

34. **Not in a permanent office.** . . . Burke here indicates the ways in which formerly public servants were rewarded. Such permanent offices were sometimes sinecures.

38. **fountain of honour.** Used of the king's prerogative in conferring titles and distinctions, peerages, knighthoods, &c.

*Page 251. 2. internal coercion.* Quelling disturbances.

5. **any municipality.** These are the smallest local bodies; after the Revolution the same as the communes. Some of them were large cities. The relief would be money voted from the central government to aid some scheme or object.

10. **no negative.** No power of preventing the fulfilment of harsh orders.

*Para. 330. High regard should exist between executive officers and the supreme power.*

24. **attempt to anticipate or.** The law cannot prevent or punish the misdoings of neglect or wrong obedience. Zealous and faithful obedience is the result of devotion or regard.

29. **are obnoxious to.** Are personally disliked by. In the examples that follow the king is regarded as supreme and the ministers as his servants. The king hated the ministers, but the ministers faithfully served their sovereign and country.

38. **Mazarin.** Cardinal; successor of Richelieu. 1602-1661.

40. **Louvois.** Marquis. 1639-1691.

Page 252. 2. **Mr. Pitt.** The elder Pitt, afterwards Earl of Chatham. The reference is to the ministry of Newcastle from 1757 up to the king's death in 1760, when Pitt was chief Secretary of State.

5. **by affairs not by affections.** By the requirements of public life and administration, they being the most capable men

available, not as persons well-pleasing to the sovereign. The king sacrificed personal feeling to public interests.

7. **avowed . . . masters.** What the National Assembly claims to be.

14. **Will any ministers . . . ?** The king's ministers have now to obey national leaders whom formerly they committed to prison. Such obedience cannot be cordial.

25. **revolution in nature.** In human nature.

38. **completed the business of.** Entirely done away with the monarchy.

40. **The new . . .** The President, or whatever the new head might be called. He would have been less limited than the king; being a creature made great and not like the latter a yielding antagonist.

Para. 331. *The king's office is now for him not worth having.*

Page 253. 12. **premium.** Prize. Lat. *præmium* reward.

25. **They will have.** If he names them they will have.

36. **attack them in their vital parts, whilst . . .** Referring to the exclusion of ministers from the National Assembly; one of the fundamental errors of the French system. In England the ministers are the leaders of Parliament and can defend themselves when attacked. This leadership is the secret of harmony in the British system; but their exclusion was desired by the Constitutional Society and other organs of radicalism.

Page 254. 2. **They are responsible.** What the French apologists say: but that does not improve service.

15. **With him who has no. . . .** Foreign ministers will find out the source of power.

Para. 332. *They imagine that in the next generation all will be well; but the plan is contrary to Nature and is incoherent and inharmonious.*

Para. 333. *The present monarchical part is not worth keeping. The king should have the prerogative of war and peace.*

Page 255. 8. **two establishments.** The assembly and its agents; the king and his ministers. Offices were very numerous under both. They were also numerous in the Departments.

19. **This pageant.** They admit that the people wanted the regal splendour. A pageant is a great show; formerly used of spectacular and theatrical entertainments on special occasions, such as the Lord Mayor's day.

**38. Other auxiliary trusts.** Other powers, also tending to make him appear to the world as a real sovereign with the power of the nation behind him. Burke points out the danger of foreign powers endeavouring to corrupt members of Parliament if they find that the decisive power is in their hands.

Page 256. I4. **correctives and control.** The power of making war should not depend on the arbitrary policy of an individual. The king should not be absolute, but should act under the conditions of constitutional government.

**M. de Montmorin.** A minister of Foreign Affairs. The reference is to the Nootka Sound (California) dispute between Spain and England. Spain appealed to France for assistance and the French ministry were meditating war, chiefly as a diversion, when the majority of the Assembly intervened and took from the king the right of declaring war or making treaties without their sanction (1790).

Para. 334. *Rumours of resignation of ministers; their position intolerable. The case of Necker.*

**36. eminence of humiliation.** Epigram or oxymoron.

Page 257. I2. **deliberate, without choice.** The same style of self-contradictory phraseology. The ministers had no choice, *i. e.*, they had to obey the Assembly; therefore their deliberations were often useless.

**24. driven him from Versailles.** Made him resign, and withdraw; Versailles being then the seat of Government.

**24. sed multae.** But many cities and public prayers have prevailed. *I. e.*, although ordered to resign and retire he was speedily recalled, the Assembly being on his side (July 11-16, 1789). His final resignation took place, 3 Sep. 1790. Earlier in his career he had been twice banished.

The quotation is from the Tenth Satire of Juvenal. The original reference is to Pompey who was sick in Campania but, in accordance with the prayers of cities, recovered. He lived to encounter overthrow. So Necker returned to lose much of his popularity and fame.

The phrase **sitting on the ruins** is derived from the story of Marius who being in exile said that he was sitting on the ruins of Carthage.

Burke now turns with equal brevity to the system of Judicature. He complains of the abolition of the Parlements and their

power of registering, and regrets that the new judges will be neither independent nor competent.

Para. 336. *Eulogy of the Parlements; necessity of an independent judicature.*

Page 258. 12. **Vendible.** Obtained by purchase. A member could sell his office to his successors.

17. **determined exertions.** The Parlements had many struggles with the Crown but their record is not highly consistent. While they endeavoured to check the Crown they were opposed to important reform. They were expelled by Louis XV., but restored by Louis XVI. In 1787 the Paris Parlement was banished and restored. In the Revolution they lost popularity and were finally abolished. 1790.

Page 259. Para. 337. The faults of the new system; faction and partisanship.

7. **elective, temporary, local.** In the new plan every district or department was to have its own judges. They were to be appointed by the electors and to hold office for six years. Accordingly Burke thinks that they will try to please the majority, and will fail to protect the stranger and the unpopular.

18. **by ballot.** The method of secret election. They will know who their supporters are whatever be the manner of voting. We may infer that Burke would have opposed voting by ballot in parliamentary elections. The method was urged by advanced reformers in England and finally adopted in 1872.

23. **partiality.** The opposite of impartiality; showing bias or favour.

Para. 338. *A historic resemblance.*

30. **Areopagus.** This body, which played an important part in early Athenian history, had functions both senatorial and judicial. As the constitution of the State developed its position became less important, though it still existed as a check on governments. It was an aristocratic body, similar to councils of nobles. The name signifies Mars' (Gr. *Ares'*) hill, and refers to the spot where the council met. As a very ancient institution it was regarded with reverence.

Page 260. 4. **monarchic and republican scrutiny.** I.e., in 1771 and again in 1789-90. Scrutiny is minute investigation.

Para. 339. *Their power of registering or refusing to register was valuable as a check.*

Royal edicts were not law until registered. The Parlements claimed the right to delay or remonstrate or refuse to register.

This was done in the case of unpopular taxes. On the other hand the Crown claimed the right to compel them.

18. of **squaring**. The mere fact of their power of remonstrance would secure more attention to principles of law and equity.

23. **psephismala**. Decrees. This was the method of the French monarchy, and it was often resorted to by the ancient democracies. In a rightly governed state law is supreme, and neither prince nor demagogue can overrule it. In the case of the French Revolution a resolution of the Assembly had the force of law.

Para. 340. *Another of the mistakes is to give the king the power of remonstrance. This is inconsistent with executive function. (A king should have the power of negativing).*

Para. 341. *The judges will become servile instruments. While chosen locally they have to obey the laws and orders of the National Assembly; and this may produce a conflict of masters.*

Page 261. 29. **court of Chatelet**. A court in Paris; next in importance to the parlement. The term means the little castle.

33. **delation**. A Law term used of giving information against, or of bringing an accusation.

Page 262. Para. 342. *They leave much to discretion while they have made a sound discretion impossible.*

Para. 343. *On the exemption of the administrative bodies; the purpose they will ultimately serve.*

23. **our king's-bench**. This and other great courts are now incorporated in the High Court of Justice. Its jurisdiction included both civil and criminal causes, and it exercised authority over magistrates and civil corporations.

29. **instruments of . . .** Burke's view of the real drift of the Revolution.

36. **accountable to the general assembly**. Burke's reply is twofold. They are more likely to be fellow-conspirators; and in any case the Assembly is not a legal body.

Para. 344. *The intended completion of the scheme, the National Tribunal for political cases. Another Inquisition.*

Page 263. 7. **Against the nation**. The new description of treason.

**that is against the power**. Burke means that in practice it would be so. Political antagonism would be construed as treason.

10. **The high court of justice.** This title was assumed by the court which tried Charles I.

11. **The great usurpation.** A phrase similar to Clarendon's "the great rebellion." Burke means the whole period from the overthrow of the authority of Charles I on to the Restoration, and not the protectorate of Cromwell only.

19. **The committee of research.** This was the name of a committee appointed to investigate opposition to the revolution. Burke by calling it 'their inquisition' compares it to the Inquisition in the Church of Rome for the suppression of heresy. It will act by slaughter like the other.

22. **If they wish. . . .** If there is to be an appearance of a court of justice two things are requisite: cases in which they are personally interested must be excluded, and the court must be at a distance from the Parisian mob.

Next chapter deals with the Army. This question is exceptionally important because of its relation to national unity. Burke finds that a state of indiscipline exists, due to the spread of revolutionary opinions amongst the soldiers, and that remedies are employed which will aggravate the disease. Again the division of authority between the municipality and the Assembly is improper and must lead to evil. The true principles of headship and discipline are set aside; and the policy of internal coercion must fail. The additional army of guards will become a national danger.

*Para. 345. The plan for the army; its importance, and the possible dangers.*

34. **third cementing principle.** An army is not a principle, but Burke means both that the army, controlled by the central government, is a symbol of national union and that it is a force sufficient to restrain any tendencies to disunion or separation. The other two principles were discussed above.

35. **body of republics.** Series of Departments.

*Page 264. 2. on good appointments. At liberal salaries.*

6. **the wolf by the ears.** A proverbial expression for a position of difficulty and danger. The army is like the wolf; it is difficult to control, and if it gets loose it may turn and devour.

9. **circumstanced.** Situated. The language is ironical. It is suggested that the army will compel its will in all matters.

Para. 346-350. *The War Minister and his official statement; complaints of indiscipline and usurpation.*

**II. Secretary of State.** This is the designation of the Head of a Department in which the interests of the whole nation are involved. In Britain there are now five such officials—the Home, Foreign, Colonial, Indian and War Secretaries—and their duties and dignity are of the first rank.

**14. assertor of . . .** The Secretary is a defender of the revolution and of government by the National Assembly. (Being the king's minister he was not a member of the Assembly). Burke makes this statement in order to add weight to the coming description of disorder.

**Page 265. 7. so full of honour and loyalty.** France, as a military people, took great pride in the army and its achievements. Now for the first time the army shows itself impregnated with political and revolutionary ideas; and this was the gravest aspect of the revolution.

**12. whilst you are indefatigable.** This sentence more than any other in the book expresses the aims of the French Reformers ; it ends with a startling contrast.

**14. uniformity in the empire.** Hitherto different laws had existed in the different provinces. All things are now to be equalised. The term empire is perhaps used because the country has been extended far beyond the original kingdom of France 'Empire' has always had a vague as well as a definite significance. The "British Empire" includes India and the Colonies. Otherwise, the term means a country ruled by an Emperor.

**16. the respect which the laws . . .** Note that the theoretical rights are placed above the laws, while the people are still under the laws. This is true if the supposed rights of man perfectly harmonise with the Divine or eternal law to which human laws should approximate.

**23. ordinances.** Regulations and instructions.

**24. chiefs.** Colonels and commanding officers.

**25. chest and the colours.** The former contains money; the latter is the badge of the regiment, the flag, or standard.

**26. risum teneatis.** Refrain from laughter. Burke by this parenthesis means that it is the natural result of the degradation of the monarchy.

**32. Commandants of places.** Commanders of fortresses, &c. This French term is accented on the last syllable.

**40. Instrument.** *i. e.* as obeying orders, and not in any sense deliberating.

Page 266. 3. **Military democracy.** Where the soldiers command their officers and thus rule the country. In Rome Emperors were repeatedly put down or created by the soldiery. In such situations civil authorities are helpless.

II. **Non-commissioned.** A term used of the higher grades of common soldiers ; sergeants, &c., An officer is one who has received a commission.

17. **Comices.** The Latin *comitia*, a term used of assemblies, or meetings to elect magistrates, in ancient Rome. The War minister implies that soldiers are assuming the functions assigned by the law to privileged citizens. These functions are beyond anything that the officers have power to permit.

Para. 351. *Enough; though more might be added.*

19. **Finished picture.** This metaphor from painting implies that the disorder is complete.

20. **not taking in.** . . . Burke sees evils beyond what have been suggested. By 'complexity' he means that not only the army in all its parts but the whole life of the country will be affected by this condition of affairs.

24. **the true constitution.** The real active and ruling force. That is to say, the phrase "military democracy" is a correct description.

30. **the corps.** The regiments, or groups of regiments.

31. **the absence.** . . . A state of passive indiscipline.

Para. 352. *The result is not surprising, in view of the unpunished crimes and the teaching of equality. This teaching is more pleasing than obedience.*

41. **doctrines, decrees, practices.** In these terms the causes are summed up. The Assembly has passed declarations, and issued edicts, and condoned violence.

Page 267. 4. **the French guards.** A regiment in Paris which could not be trusted to obey orders. The French guards were distinguished from the Swiss guards.

32. **You unite.** The Assembly possesses both power and reputation (or respect).

39. **royal figure.** One who is a king in name only.

Para. 353. *The Minister's proposals: proclamations and oaths. Burke's sneering comment.*

Page 268. 6. **breaking of.** . . . Disbanding.

7. **decimating.** Executing a certain proportion, (originally in Rome one-tenth).

20. **pretes avec.** Tendered with the most imposing solemnity.

26. **handy abridgments.** Convenient summaries. The whole sentence is ironical. The three subjects specified were themes of frequent discussion in the 18th century. By a "particular superintending Providence" the care of the individual, as distinguished from the general providential order, is indicated. The Future State of Rewards belongs to the conception of this life as a probation and preparation for another. These doctrines were denied by the men specified. Burke implies that these abridgments would teach the soldiers that oaths might be violated with impunity.

35. **military exercises.** Military training. The pamphlets were both irreligious in doctrine and revolutionary in politics.

Para. 354. *Another cure: feasting with citizens. A pleasing but not effective remedy.*

Page 269. 7. **circular letters.** Letters not addressed to one particular place, but of which copies are sent all round.

10. **clubs and confederations.** . . . Confederacies of the people in the various cities. Civic feasts were a feature of the early stages of the Revolution.

12. **This jolly discipline.** . . . This sentence states, by way of caricature, the object indicated in the circular letters. The idea was to make the movement thoroughly national, and to unite all French men in the new cause of liberty. It was hoped that thus "particular conspiracies" of a local or personal kind would be discouraged. Burke implies that the method of joint feasting must be fatal to military discipline. Soldiers will soon cease to regard themselves as merely instrumental.

Page 270. Para. 355. *Relations between the army and the municipalities: encroachments of the latter.*

14. **the administration.** The War Office, of which Du Pin is the head.

17. **your institutions have** . . . By the law of the country still maintained the king is the head of the army; but the departments, especially the larger cities, are assuming part of the royal authority.

22. **right of requisition.** Right of calling to their assistance. This is the only power connected with the army that has been definitely assigned to the municipalities.

23. **the letter or the spirit of . . .** Your decrees either in words or in intention. A familiar antithesis.

24. **the commons.** The municipal deputies. The clauses that follow state what these municipal bodies have presumed to do.

Para. 356. *The pitiable situation of the War minister.*

Page 271. 5. **in their civic cups.** . . . The language is metaphorical. An old soldier entering into these raw schemes is compared to a man joining a company of jovial youths and drinking health and prosperity to their boyish enterprises.

6. **fantastic vagaries.** Wild and fanciful freaks.

9. **wear and tear.** Active experience; a familiar combination of words indicating the effects of time.

II. **grand compounders.** To 'compound' is to arrange by paying compensation. The reference to 'degrees' shows that Burke is referring to an old practice by which a university degree could be obtained without the full keeping of terms, in consideration of the payment of special fees. The words are here metaphorically used of those who presume to act as politicians without the necessary training.

13. **inward fanatical assurance and . . .** The words are primarily applicable to religious bodies who claim such enlightenment.

21. **errors and heresies of experience.** The words satirise the ignorance and presumption of such fanatics.

25. **peremptory.** Uncompromising.

26. **deal in regeneration.** The revolutionists talked of regenerating France.

28. **climacteric.** A term used of a critical period of life; the grand or great climacteric being the 63rd year ( $63 = 9 \times 7$ ). From this we may infer Burke's age. Akin to climax. Gr. *klimakter* step of a ladder or *klimax*.

30. **elemental sounds.** The beginnings; a new alphabet.

31. **Si isti mihi.** If they should grant me to be a boy again, and to cry in their cradles, I should with all my might refuse.

Para. 357. *To show the weakness of any one part of the system is to expose the weakness of other related parts; and evils are attempted to be cured by fresh forms of these evils.*

35. **pedantic.** Such as suits a school boy.

Page 272. I3. which is the strongest. *i. e.*, in numbers.

I4. But the municipalities. . . This sentence is supposed to be spoken in reply to Burke.

**affect a sovereignty.** Aim at sovereign power. Consequently they will summon and instruct as many troops as are necessary for the preservation of order. Command=commandeer, according to the right of requisition and the sovereign authority.

I7. command them or court them. The two alternatives. In the latter case they will be either servants or confederates.

24. What government is there . . . ? Powers were divided between the municipalities and the military department of which the king is the nominal head. This latter has no real power over the army.

32. debauched interest. Referring to the civic feasts and the attempt to imbue the soldiers with ideas of citizenship.

Para. 358. Every thing points to increase of confusion. In a real army the officer must have undivided power and obedience.

4I. rendered obedient by furnishing . . . The supremacy of the army is a chief means of preserving the unity of the nation and the subordination of the municipalities. But the municipalities both by their powers over the army and their civic feasting will be able to counteract the above intention.

Page 273. 3. chimeras. Impracticable absurdities. The chimera was a fire-breathing monster, partly lion and goat and dragon.

12. radical and intrinsic. Fundamental and essential. Intrinsic is what is from within; opposed to extrinsic or accidental.

19. first and last. Everything.

27. the authority by which . . . Here, in his usual manner, Burke introduces the subject of next paragraph, the mode of election of officers.

Para. 359. Probable consequences of the system of nomination, factions. On the other hand a mere system of seniority will aggravate the military independence. Problems of the relation of the army to the crown will arise.

Page 274. I. negative indefinitely. If the Assembly make a practice of opposing the king's nominations the king will nominate only those whom they wish.

6. **solicitation.** For appointment or promotion.

33. **Not they but the king . . .** They possess the power. The king is the instrument.

34. **by halves.** If half his authority is gone, it will all go. The division of power between him and the assembly seems a halving of authority.

39, **such a cipher.** One who can neither promote nor punish can have no real authority.

Page 275. I. **constrained.** Kept in order.

4. **the authority of the assembly. . . .** The assembly is supreme, but inasmuch as it acts through a weak organ or channel it also will lose respect.

10. **either despise a pageant or.** The two ways of looking at the king. These unhappy alternatives suggest the term dilemma in next sentence.

Para. 360. *The army cannot be loyal to an Assembly which is temporary and controlled by attorneys. They will obey the first military leader that arises; and he will command the State.*

22. **popular authority.** Authority derived from the people at large. Armies have been wont to obey kings and emperors (not civilians).

31. **whose military policy.** Including questions of the organisation of the army and of the purpose for which the army exists.

32. **genius.** Spirit, inner nature.

37. **popular general.** Here popular is used in the modern sense, and the qualities that make a general popular are stated in the next two clauses.

41. **personal account.** It is personality, not theory, that naturally commands the obedience of soldiers.

Para. 361. *The Army, no longer obedient, will claim as a right the power (enjoyed by other bodies) of electing their officers.*

Page 276. I2. **the central point.** Loyalty or obedience to the officer in immediate command.

16. **the chain commences.** The soldier obeys his captain, above whom are the higher officers in a series extending to the commander-in-chief.

31. **permissive.** Continuing by permission, not confirmed in a permanent appointment.

34. **a second negative.** Another check on the king's nominations.

39. **the direct choice.** The principle of election was being applied all round, in the church, the judicature, &c.

Page 277. 4. **another army.** The National Guards, formed first in Paris and then all over the country. This was a sort of citizen army joined by many deserters from the main army. It is called here a municipal army because it belonged to the cities.

12. **Marquis de la Fayette.** This officer who had distinguished himself in America was chosen head of the National Guard of Paris. On the abolition of titles he became Sieur Motier.

14. **If this election. . . .** These are the supposed words (or argument) of the soldiers. So of the questions that follow.

24. **do they therefore lose.** An imagined grievance. Certain rights were denied to the officers of government; as in the exclusion of ministers from the Assembly. The soldiers are supposed to ask whether the fact that they are paid by the state is the reason why they are deprived of a natural right (*i. e.*, to elect their superiors). The next two sentences give the answers that are likely to occur to the soldiers.

Para. 362. *By destroying old arrangements you have made the army the only power. Force is required at home and in the colonies. Inconsistencies.*

Page 278. 19. **internal coercion.** Suppressing disturbances in the country, or intimidating.

19. **colonies assert.** French colonies in Central America. They take up the question of rights and consider their own interests. Especially in the sugar plantations of San Domingo violent disturbance arose.

24. **their commerce monopolised. . . .** The French government insist on arrangements for the good of France which the colonists deem a violation of their rights. Thus they make war on rights.

26. **the negroes.** African slaves who worked in the manufacture of sugar. They too claimed the rights of man.

33. **the lord of the soil.** The feudal superior, now repudiated.

35. **all rents and dues except.** Burke's object is to illustrate inconsistency or departure from theory. Some severe taxes are allowed to be repudiated, but others (which on the same principles are also unjust) are to be enforced. This is called "limiting

logic by despotism." Part of the logic or metaphysics is permitted, and part is rejected. The next sentence states more fully the self-contradictory conduct of the political leaders.

Para. 363. *In reality the grievances are very slightly mitigated. The land rents remain.*

Page 279. 14. **feodality.** Feudalism, or what pertains thereto. Low Lat. *feudum*, of Teutonic origin.

21. **quit-rents.** Rents paid by free-holders in lieu of other services.

22. **to redeem.** To get rid of by one payment.

24. **those burthens.** The remaining taxes. These were part of the feudal system, and they say that they should cease with that system.

Para. 364. *Arguments of the peasantry. They assert rights of the cultivator and deny the title of the land-lord.*

35. **Gauls.** The possessors before the conquest by Caesar. Lat. *Gallus*.

**if they fail. . . .** If they cannot trace their occupation of the soil back to the Gauls or Romans, they have a claim stronger than prescription in the rights of man.

Page 280. 4. **occupant and subduer.** Tenant and original cultivator.

5. **proprietor.** Owner. *I. e.*, the land belongs to them and not to the landlord.

10. **duresse.** Constraint, a semi-legal term. The form is French. Cf. noblesse, idlesse.

16. **idler with a hat. . . .** The meaning is that secular landlords are no better than ecclesiastical landlords ; and that as the Assembly has disinherited the latter so with equal justice will they refuse to pay rents to the former. A **cowl** is a hood worn by a monk ; a **rochet** is a short surplice worn by a bishop. The terms indicate the two kinds of ecclesiastics (abbots and bishops).

17. **if you ground. . .** If you lay down that the landlords are entitled to draw rents, because they have succeeded to estates which have been so held from time immemorial, they can quote your own publications against such prescription.

26. **that the succession of those who . . .** That the true succession belongs not to the landlord with his title-deeds but to the farmers who have laboured on the soil.

28. **substitutions.** In French law the term means entail.

31. **lay monks.** The landlords, whose case is in their opinion parallel to that of the monks, and to whom, similarly, they would grant a small pension.

Para. 365. *A series of arguments based on the abolition of the rank of gentlemen.*

36. **coin of sophistic reason.** The sophistic mode of reasoning which you have made current coin.

37. **image and Superscription.** Referring to the figure and words on a coin: quoted from *Matthew XXII.*, 20.

38. **tell them you will . . .** You threaten force.

40. **Dragoons and hussars** are both terms used of cavalry. The former is from the French, the latter from the Hungarian.

41. **secondhand authority.** Because the king is supposed to act in obedience to the Assembly.

Page 281. 10. **when you took down the cause.** The cause is the maintenance of dignities, the effect is the burden on the people. Took down = ended, or removed.

18. **exactors.** Oppressive rent collectors.

21. **arms reversed.** This was the old way of marking the degradation of a knight.

22. **impresses.** Cognizances, figures on the shield.

**displumed.** Deprived of plumes, *i. e.*, of honours.

23. **unfeathered, two-legged.** The words are quoted from Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel* and describe simple humanity; being applied to Shaftesbury's son. They are apparently a translation of the Greek, an "animal two-footed, unfledged" which, it is said, Plato gave as a definition of man.

29. **personal identity.** As the bodily elements or materials of man are continually changing it used to be questioned whether the same identity is preserved from birth to death.

Page 282. II. **this measure of yours.** The abolition of titles, &c.

20. **to sabre and to bayonet.** The words refer to cavalry and infantry respectively. The latter is supposed to have got its name from Bayonne in France.

23. **authority of opinion.** *I. e.*, of established ideas and usages.

Para. 366. *Why the Assembly have not cancelled the rents.*

28. **it is solid.** On the principles of the revolutionaries these arguments are valid and unanswerable.

35. **But they had . . .** To have abrogated all rents would have destroyed the value of the confiscated church property. The land of the secular aristocracy is preserved in order that the assembly may be able to obtain the benefit of what they have plundered. Nothing is secure in its own right.

Para. 367. *As the peasants so also the cities are ready to repudiate the imposts. Your one argument*

Page 283. I7. **old states methodised by orders.** The three ancient states organised in their separate orders and thus made efficient.

23. **the gabelles.** The salt tax. The plural is used because the tax was variously imposed in different districts. Apart from the tax, great evils were connected with the manner of levying it.

30. **The last reason.** . . . What kings resort to when they cannot succeed otherwise, you begin with. Reason argument, or resource.

35. **this weapon will.** . . . By and bye the soldiers will refuse to act.

Page 284. I. **anarchic.** Imbued with the principles of disobedience to authority.

Para. 368. *The new army of Guards; unsuited for the maintenance of a national constitution.*

3. **municipal army.** The guards organised in the cities.

7. **democratic body.** A body created by the people in the districts.

19. **a monster.** A thing of an unprecedented kind and not constituted in any regular shape; the parts not being duly related to each other or to any central authority.

20. **systasis of Crete.** Systasis or synthesis means uniting together in one whole; the same idea as system, or constitution.

In Crete there were several local governments with some arrangement for united action when necessary. Gr.

**confederation.** Poland contained diversity of interests and had jealous neighbours. It was internally weak because the monarchy was elective and nominal, the peasantry were serfs, and the nobles had undue power. The Confederation refers to the right allowed to the nobles of irresponsible combination.

The final chapter is on Finance. Burke eloquently asserts the vital bearing of the subject on national life and lays down the aims or objects by the attainment of which financial skill is to be tested. He finds an insufficient revenue, ill-proportioned taxation and desperate expedients, deficits combined with extravagance, want of credit and an infinite expectation from the issue of assignats ; while the charges thrown on the church lands far exceed the income from these lands. Burke also complains of the want of clear and exact statements.

Para. 369. The five great departments of State, or divisions of public action, are recalled.

33. **reciprocal relation.** Inter-relation. The term 'mutual' is used when there are two; reciprocal is more indefinite.

Page 285. Para. 370. *Burke recalls that this was the original problem for the solution of which the States were summoned. He shows the great importance of public revenue in relation to public life ; and the necessity of a due and careful attention to the principles of Political Economy.*

6. **to enlarge its connection.** Perhaps what is now called broadening the basis. This included abolition of privileges.

15. **is the state.** This statement is enlarged in the following six sentences. All national power and prosperity depend on the existence of an abundant and inoppressive revenue. Hence finance is the key to all political problems.

22. **suffering and passive.** Synonyms, opposed to active or operative.

26. **Public virtue.** The virtues of the State and citizenship. These include the maintenance of public works and institutions, and the exercise of a generous spirit in all public affairs and arrangements.

31. **under confinement.** When restrained by insufficient revenue.

34. **in its true genius and character.** According to its best aim and purpose. Genius—spirit, or peculiar character.

42. **tutelary protection.** Protection and encouragement, as of a special guardian and defender.

Page 286. I. **food and . . . organs.** Highly metaphorical. These great virtues are thus nourished and made effective.

2. **continence, and . . .** The qualities of self-restraint that are needed to prevent prodigality and waste and sloth. Especially economy is the fundamental virtue of finance.

**9. speculative and practical.** The Science has the two sides of thought and practical experience, and is aided by philosophical and historic study. In Burke's day the science of Political Economy took shape as the chief science bearing on questions regarding wealth.

**13. grown with the progress . . .** In the 18th century industries and manufactures increased, and with them the wealth of nations and the complexity of life. The increase of revenues allows an increase of national expenditure in education and enterprise and beneficence. Burke has in mind the verse of Pope:

Grows with its growth and strengthens with its strength.

**18. as long as the balance . . .** A rather vague dictum of political economy. The revenue collected for the State should bear a fixed or fair proportion to what is left for the comfort and improvement of the individuals. Burke says a "due" proportion but does not indicate what percentage of income he would allow to the State.

**23. And perhaps . . .** Burke endeavours to explain why the people are now more critical than in former times.

Page 287. Para. 371-372. *Objects by which success may be measured. First, amplitude.*

**2. with judgment and equality.** In due proportion.

**4. make use of credit.** To borrow money; as when expenditure is suddenly increased on account of war or other cause.

**5. its foundations.** The foundations, or fixed basis, of credit. Burke states three necessary conditions. Solidity == certainty.

**19. two hundred millions.** *i. e.*, of livres. The first fact is a great diminution of revenue.

**25. no common.** Only very great. This is Burke's judgment.

**27. peculation.** Acts of embezzlement or of appropriating public money.

**32. Cedo qui.** By what means have you so soon lost that great republic of yours? From an old dramatist Nævius, quoted by Cicero, with the answer that the calamity was due to the action of young men.

Para. 373-374. *The Assembly condemned the salt monopoly but provided no substitute. The provinces repudiated the tax.*

**38. public monopoly of salt.** Every family, except the privileged, had to pay duty on a certain amount of salt which they

were supposed to need. Salt was supplied by government. There were strict laws against smuggling, and against the use of salt water.

40. **oppressive and partial.** The tax was heavy and a vast number of persons were employed in watching and collecting. It was partial because some persons and places were privileged, and because the amount varied in each of the six districts into which for this purpose France was divided.

Page 288. 9. **the provinces which. . . .** The Assembly wished the exempted provinces to bear a share and so partially relieve the others.

23. **accommodation.** Mutual arrangement.

33. **animated by. . . .** When once one tax was repudiated others also were repudiated at pleasure.

Para. 375. *Injustice, or inequality, first in allowing districts to decide what each will pay, and secondly in calling for a voluntary surrender of a part of income.*

38. **equal** Fair or just ; explained as proportionate to income.

41. **active capital.** Capital employed in manufactures or industries. By such capital labour is maintained and multitudes find employment. Hence the increase of wealth, from which comes larger revenue.

Page 289. 2. **the several.** The different. Several is here used in two senses.

6. **new inequality.** The inequality was due to the pleasure of the districts ; but it was oppressive because it laid the greatest burden on the most loyal.

18. **a voluntary benevolence.** Free gifts of money to the State ; an appeal to honour.

26. **tax in the disguise of.** Burke says that though finely named it was in reality a tax ; and that it was a bad tax, being estimated on incomes and not on superfluities.

30. **upon integrity.** A second aspect in which it is bad ; it is a bad tax on the best men in the service of their country, and one which the best men will most readily pay. Others will evade it.

32. **the mask.** The disguise in calling it a benevolence.

Para. 376. *Another kindred scheme, donations of articles ; a temporary and trivial expedient.*

39. **donations.** Gifts in some other form.

41. **John Doe, Richard Roe.** Fictitious names used in law books; here representing the donations and the contributions respectively. The one is as a **security** or guarantee for the other.

Page 290. 2. **of much price from . . .** Articles of great value to the owners, but which when sold brought little to the State.

5. **plate.** Gold or silver vessels.

10. **doting despotism.** The method of despots in their decline.

11. **full-bottomed periwig.** A wig fully covering the top of the head. The form periwig is corrupted from the Fr. *perruque*. Wig is an abbreviation.

15. **premature baldness.** The Assembly is juvenile with the defects of old age. It is resorting to the methods adopted by Louis XIV. in his unsuccessful wars near the close of his life.

15. **formal folly.** Formal is an epithet descriptive of the general style that prevailed at the beginning of the 18th century, when fashions now antique prevailed.

20. **by Louis XV.** Towards the end of the Seven Years' War, 1762.

24. **deliberations of calamity.** Required by calamity; both due to disasters and made in the midst of them.

29. **desperate trifling.** Trivial methods resorted to in a state of despair. A sort of oxymoron.

34. **temporary supply.** Such methods could not be repeated. They made a temporary provision for a permanent need.

Page 291. 5. **they cut off the springs.** By diminishing the wealth and activities of the country.

Para. 377. *The increase of their paper money and the contrast with conditions in England.*

27. **fictitious representation.** The paper money. Note in this and next sentence the balanced structure.

30. **the creature not . . .** The creation not of confidence but of authority and force.

31. **they imagine . . .** Their inverted view of British prosperity.

34. **solidity of our credit.** Completeness of confidence.

35. **total exclusion . . .** Entirely voluntary character of the use of bank notes.

40. **cash actually deposited.** The notes issued by a bank must not represent a value greater than the gold possessed.

Page 292. 2. **because in law . . .** A paradoxical statement the truth of which is due to fulness of confidence. If the notes had a slight or varying intrinsic value they would not be accepted in business. Their value depends entirely on the complete acceptance of the promise asserted in them.

3. **Change.** The Stock Exchange.

4. **Westminster-hall.** Formerly a famous court of justice. In it Burke impeached Hastings. Now it is a virtually unused part of the parliamentary buildings.

14. **symbol of prosperity.** Abundance of paper circulation shows both confidence and activity. Prosperity abounds when activity prevails in all departments of business, in manufactures and commerce and agriculture, and the works pertaining thereto.

Para. 378. *What of economy? They have lavishly increased expenditure.*

36. **chargeable.** Loaded with charges, or necessary payments.

Page 293. Para. 379. *Can they borrow easily?*

4. **on credit.** On account of the confidence reposed in them.

17. **Holland, Hamburgh.** Burke names places near to France and noted for commercial prosperity. Hamburgh is one of the free cities of Germany. Genoa is the chief commercial city in the north-west of Italy; long an independent duchy.

25. **one of his engagements with. . .** Paying obligations to creditors by money due to others. (To defend the church possessions was an engagement of public duty.)

26. **his very penury into . . .** Making poverty an excuse for plunder.

Para. 380. *The absurd faith in assignats. Burke's ridicule and satire.*

31. **philosopher's stone.** The stone which was to turn metals into gold.

33. **hermetic art.** Alchemy. This art had two main ideas, to make gold and to lengthen life by an elixir. From Hermes who in the earlier middle ages was reckoned the head of all occult science. Hermes was identified with Mercury.

Page 294. 2. **universal medicine.** A panacea for all ills. The term 'medicine' was used of the elixir or of any magical potion.

3. **of church mummy.** Derived from the ancient church lands; the church being regarded as no longer a living body but as an ancient embalmed figure from which a magical medicine may be extracted.

7. **prodigies of sacrilege.** Or miracles of impiety. The Assembly assume that the Church lands will wonderfully supply all needs.

II. **freehold in their office.** Their place in the church, which was to them as a freehold or independent possession.

29. **their inefficacy.** Their insufficiency for the purpose, especially the fact that as they are multiplied in number they decrease in value.

32. **Mais si maladie.** But if the maladies are obstinate and will not be cured what is he to do? Assign, and again assign, and yet again assign. The words are from a comedy of Moliere in which medical incapacity is satirised. Burke substitutes 'assignare' for a somewhat similar term in the original. The words are in bad Latin, with a slight touch of French.

39. **than the cuckoo.** It has one double note.

41. **harbinger of summer.** In Logan's poem the cuckoo is hailed as the messenger of spring. In this respect they resemble birds not of good but of evil omen.

Page 295. Para. 381. *When they resolved on the plunder of the church they were bound to show that they knew what they were doing, so as to make the scheme as effective as possible.*

10. **prelate.** Talleyrand. The epithets are ironical. Talleyrand afterwards won distinction as an ambassador. The footnote seems to indicate that a similar description of La Bruyere was given by Bossuet. Bossuet was a very eminent preacher in the reign of Louis XIV. La Bruyere (1644-1696) is best known as a writer of *characters*.

14. **comptroller-general of sacrilege.** The meaning is the same as of the preceding phrase. Comptroller-general was in France the designation of the Finance Minister.

12. **Fisc.** The exchequer, or national treasury.

22. **Their bank.** *I.e.*, the church property.

Para. 382-3. *The duty of accuracy and candour. Brokers should know what they are purchasing.*

25. **any Land-bank.** Any banking system where the security is in land. The point here is stated more strongly in para. 382. An attempt of the kind was made in England when the modern banking system was in its beginnings at the end of the 17th century.

Page 296. 6. **mortgage.** Pledge as a security.

13. **a net surplus.** After deduction of charges of management, &c.

17. **trustees.** Persons appointed in charge of the property and the applications of it.

19. **after this, he . . .** This is what the French did not do. They made no examinations and deductions before taking action to convert the land into money.

30. **dread of the resumption.** What is to be expected in a case of mortgaging.

31. **might be made.** In the case of France this might happen if there should be a conservative reaction and a restoration of the powers of the monarchy and church.

Para. 384-5. *It is also required on account of a solemn pledge to support Catholicism.*

Page 297. 14. R. C. A. Roman, Catholic and Apostolic; a new description of the church recognised in France.

**the support of . . .** These three clauses describe the main religious objects. By the 'other sex' sisterhoods are indicated.

19. **disengaged of all charges.** Made clear or net.

33. **rent-roll of the immoveable.** The income derived from property.

35. **inventory of the moveable.** List of articles that can be removed and sold.

39. **without authenticating. . . .** Without officially determining the value of the estates and the amount to be deducted. Until this is done they cannot know what is available for the public service. But they have at once proceeded to issue a vast quantity of *assignats*.

Page 298. 8. **financial indulgences.** The language is ironical. 'Indulgences' are special forms of favour; and the term has been used historically of papal indulgences and in England of the remission of strict law. The issue of the *assignats* is to the church not indulgence but the opposite.

9. **to make good.** What they have not done.

Para. 386. *It is now clear that there is no surplus whatever for the public service.*

I. **At length.** . . . This paragraph is evidently later than the preceding, being written after the receipt of further information.

39. **the calculating powers of imposture!** The figure of Exclamation is here used, as in oratory, to intensify the impression of fraud, delusion and incapacity.

Page 299. 4. **Never did.** . . . General conclusions supported by all history.

Para. 387. *Other additions; pensions, interest of assignats, agencies.*

16. **estates in offices.** Official appointments recognised as legal property ; such as judgeships.

17. **colour.** Appearance.

Page 300. 2. **annuity.** Annual payment to the stock-jobbers that have advanced money on the security of the lands.

**Nancy.** In the north-east of France, capital of Lorraine ; a centre of revolutionary activity.

Para. 388. *All is uncertain, yet the assignats are forced, and the mob silences reason.*

16. **incumbrance.** Obligations to be met from the church lands.

17. **grand incumbrance.** The fees and salaries of the vast number of agents employed.

**before the creditor can** . . . All these are primary expenses, to be paid before the creditor can get any benefit from the land. **Cabbage** is a familiar vegetable.

22. **blindfold themselves, like** . . . Without knowing the effects of their past action they compel the acceptance of their new currency.

36. **to a future credit.** They appeal for confidence in a time of difficulty, hoping that in the future things will rectify themselves.

Page 301. 3. **subtle dexterity.** Wonderful cleverness. Lat. *dexter* the right (hand).

7. **in the street.** Referring to the mob. These riotous persons, supporting the confiscation, answer, by violent outcry, the objections put forth by able men in the Assembly. The phrase

"the man in the street" is now a familiar designation of average intelligence.

8. **These are the numbers . . .** The ignorant multitude.

13. **club at Dundee.** A club in sympathy with the Revolution, called the Friends of Liberty; here quoted as an antithesis to the experienced directors of the Bank of England.

26. **rumpled and ragged Scotch paper.** Notes are used in Scotland more fully than in England. The Scots would not give a corner of an old one-pound note for twenty French notes. Dog's ear or dog-eared is an expression used of a folded or turned down corner. It is hinted that the Scots are careful of their money.

Para. 389. *The large issue of small effect, with the result of depreciation, and the demand of cash for the army and the public service. The Assembly's dilemma and boldness.*

34. **depreciation.** The result in the money market of this large issue was an immediate lowering of value.

**the collectors . . .** They took natural advantage of what had become the rate of exchange.

Page 302. 7. **for the mint.** *I. e.*, bars to be coined.

8. **about twelve thousand.** This loss was sustained because the purchase had to be made abroad. The foreign sellers would require to be paid in some form of real, or certain, money.

10. **secret nutritive.** Recalling the metaphor of the mummy. The following phrase is a variation of the biblical "man cannot live by bread alone."

14. **having iron.** *I. e.*, weapons. The soldiers refused to accept depreciated money and demanded cash (or real money).

30. **dilemma.** The points or horns are: if they receive the paper they injure the Treasury; if they reject the paper they discredit it, and their whole policy. **Alien** is something foreign, or adverse; **amulets** are charms, used because of the supposed infinite resources in the church lands.

40. **above legislative competence.** The declaration was such as could not be made good by any legislature. The Assembly was not able to prevent the depreciation.

Page 303. 2. **proof.** Probably, unanswerable; proof against argument.

**article of faith.** Doctrine; the term 'article' being used of the heads in creeds,

3. **under an anathema.** The Church of Rome strengthened its dogmas by anathemas.

4. **synod.** Here used of the National Assembly, transferred from church assemblies. Gr. *sun hodos* journeying together; hence used in Latin, French and English.

5. **Credat.** "Let Apella the Jew believe" is the meaning in Horace; *Satires* first Book V. 100; where the credulity of the Jews is alluded to. Burke means the opposite. The French fallacies will not deceive the Jewish money-lenders.

Para. 390. *Comparison with the Mississippi speculations. These were far loftier and they respected freedom.*

8. **magic lanthorn.** The metaphor seems to imply that the magic lanterns of Burke's day bewildered as well as magnified.

9. **exhibitions of Mr. Law.** See above. Burke on the contrary maintains that there was more solid foundation for Law's scheme than for the Assembly's

10. **sands. . . . rock.** The contrast of an unsure and a sure foundation. This contrast is taken from Mat. VII. 24. The description of the church as a rock may have a second reference to the strength and permanence of Christianity Mat XVI. 18.

13. **glorious.** Boastful.

**what piece of solid.** Whether there is really anything that can be used for the State.

22. **the farms.** The amount of the various contracts for the raising of revenue from excise and kindred duties. A farmer of revenue is one who pays a lump sum to government and endeavours to make a profit by the taxes he is authorised to collect.

24. **the structure.** Burke says that the enlargement of the Mississippi scheme was due to the great hopes which it aroused.

30. **the two hemispheres.** It included trade or business in India, Africa, France, and America; therefore virtually in the whole world.

31. **feeding from France.** Enriching the country by what was taken from its own people.

34, 35: **eagle, mole.** A strong contrast, to express the loftiness of the one idea and the meanness of the other.

36. **muzzling.** Burrowing with the nose.

Page 304. 5. **glimmerings.** The comparison is with the approach of dawn.

Para. 391. *A scheme for turning church bells into brass money: contemptible.*

Para. 392. *Their vain transactions and devices and delays, after the manner of bankrupts; and their false claim to having relieved those that relieved themselves.*

24. *on the play . . .* The government and the Bank negotiated in form, but the transactions were unreal. Each wished to help the other.

Para. 393. *Has there been real relief? A picture of distress in Paris. That city will impoverish the country.*

Page 305. 24. **blockade.** The city is as much in want as if an army were surrounding it and preventing ingress or egress.

26. **ordnance.** Guns. A special form of ordinance, having originally referred to regulations regarding the size and use of the guns. Burke refers to the time when the succession of Henry IV was prevented.

33. **cold, dry, petrific mace.** These words are from Milton P. L. X. 293, who is describing the action of Death. Mace is the symbol of power. Petrific means, turning to stone.

39. **July 1789.** The date of the fall of the Bastille.

Page 306. II. **from the vitals of.** From the agriculture of the country. Paris has been fostered and is, nevertheless, in distress. She will continue to depend upon the country as Rome did. This is what happens when a country is divided into democracies, each of which is sovereign. The central one dominates the whole.

**I7** *it may survive.* The republic in Rome was superseded by the Empire, yet the old conditions remained. The same thing may happen in France.

19. **despotism itself. . . .** Even the despot must please the populace of the capital.

21. **evils of both systems.** Evils of despotism, combined with the rule of the people of the capital; tyranny with a tinge of anarchy.

Para. 394. *General principles of prosperity; natural subordination and the consolations of religion.*

31. **to pay considerably and . . .** A country highly taxed but possessing good government and profitable industry is in a better way than one slightly taxed with feeble industries and government.

37. **To keep a balance.** This statement regarding a due proportion between what is left and what is surrendered of a man's savings was made above. The important point is the balance or proportion.

Page 307. 7. **by art.** By skilful and cunning instruction. The words are contrasted with 'natural.'

14. **Of this consolation whoever . . .** The atheist, and the evil he does.

15. **deadens . . .** The paralysis produced.

22. **to the plunder of . . .** By evil speculations he has made men think plunder a right thing, and so has encouraged bad men to injure the good.

Para. 395. *Financiers are apt to think that prosperity is the result of successful transactions and manipulations, but the main thing is the external principles of order and justice.*

27. **tontines.** A special kind of annuity ; it being divided between the subscribers to a loan in such a way that the last survivors receive most. Named after an Italian Tonti who invented it.

**small wares.** Little devices or details. Metaphor.

40. **politics.** Methods of public action.

**:presumptuous . . .** The chief mental defects ; want of caution, foresight and breadth.

In five paragraphs Burke closes his general argument and concludes his book. He restates the fundamental facts of liberty and government, and explains his own position.

Page 308. Para. 396. *The conditions of a free government ; the tempering or harmony of liberty and restraint.*

**What is liberty without. . . ?** This is the sentiment so often expressed by Milton both in prose and verse : as in *Comus* " love virtue, she alone is free " ; who loves liberty must " first be wise and good " (Sonnets) etc.

13. **swelling sentiments.** Fine glowing passages in literature. Lucan was an epic poet in the reign of Nero, early killed. His *Pharsalia* was on the wars of Pompey. Corneille was the first great French tragedian (1606-1684) ; the literature of his day was full of heroic gallantry.

19. **little arts.** Devices by which men seek to obtain credit with the public. Burke here unbends.

20. **They facilitate. . . .** Helpful effects of a pleasing manner.

23. **occasional gaiety.** They sometimes cause amusement and call forth expressions of wit or humour. Life is diversified and made interesting by this lighter side.

25. **sacrifice to the graces.** The Graces were three divinities that in Greece represented the arts and refinements of life. To sacrifice to these is to acknowledge that there is a place for refined culture and polished expression even in the affairs of government and legislature. Burke refers to the fact that many of the French politicians had gifts of eloquence or artistic style.

26. **join compliance with reason.** Not merely to assert the truth of reason but to unite therewith the arts of conciliation.

34. **a free government.** Each of these words expresses what is easily set up. The requirement is the combination, and therein is the difficulty.

Page 309. 4. **bidders at an auction . . .** A severe censure on men trying to outbid each other in winning popularity. The consequences of such policy is described in the following sentences. Extreme and destructive measures are the result.

Para. 397. *An acknowledgment of some beneficial things. But these could have been attained without a revolution.*

41. **what is not very equivocal.** Which is not of very doubtful benefit. All the really and certainly good acts were either voluntarily ceded by the king, or were implied in the instructions given to the three estates.

Para. 398. *The bearing on England. Burke repeats the duty of conservation while making alterations. Let there be no aerial flights as in France.*

Page 310. 17. **some causes of apprehension.** Burke refers to the political agitation and dissatisfaction at the time when he wrote. All parties, crown, commons, cities, had been repeatedly wrong. On account of these errors a revolutionary spirit had appeared.

34. **in the style of the building.** In the former style. The new additions or alterations should be in the same style of architecture. In this metaphor, and in the latter half of the paragraph, Burke is repeating what he said in the first part of the book.

**complexional.** Constitutional, with the emphasis on the physical side.

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Para. 399. *Personal.* Burke's correspondent must adopt himself to his country; but afterwards he may find benefit in Burke's *Reflections*.

Page 311. 21. *one of our poets.* Addison (1672-1719), who in a mild and genial way commended the principles of Whiggism. The quotation is from his tragedy of *Cato*, produced 1713.

22. *transmigrations.* Successive stages of existence. Burke fears that France will be exposed not to continuous development, but to frequent changes made with spasmodic efforts or accompanied with severe chastisement.

Para. 400. *Burke's own confession or apology.*

The book closes with noble dignity, and the reader has the sensation of calm after a voyage in troubled waters.

Page 312. 7. *equipoise.* Balance. When the ship of the State seems overloaded on one side Burke throws what weight belongs to him on the other side. His purpose is to steady the vessel. By this metaphor he endeavours to explain how it is that he is at one time found on the liberal side, and at another time amongst the conservatives.